

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5035

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & State Security, January 15, 2015

Note: Senate Resolution 8609 adopted January 27, 2015, renamed this committee to Committee on Government Operations & Security

Title: An act relating to the medal of valor.

Brief Description: Authorizing the awarding of the medal of valor to a group of persons.

Sponsors: Senators Pearson, Kohl-Welles, Hatfield and Liias; by request of Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & State Security: 1/15/15 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & STATE SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Liias, Ranking Minority Member; Habib and McCoy.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: In 2000 the state Medal of Valor was established. The medal may be awarded by the Governor, in the name of the state, to any person who saved, or attempted to save, the life of another at the risk of serious injury or death to themselves, upon the selection of the Governor's Medal of Valor Committee. The award is presented only during a joint session of both houses of the Legislature. Any individual may nominate any resident of this state for any act of valor.

The medal cannot be awarded to those acting as a result of service given by any branch of law enforcement, firefighting, rescue, or other hazardous profession where the individual is employed by a government entity within the state of Washington. It may be awarded posthumously.

The Governor's Medal of Valor Committee consists of the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or their

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designees. The Secretary of State serves as a nonvoting ex-officio member and serves as the secretary to the committee.

Summary of Bill: The state Medal of Valor may also be awarded to a group of persons who saved, or attempted to save, the life of another at the risk of serious injury to themselves.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: After the Oso mudslide, it was determined that it would be appropriate to let a whole group be mentioned, because you can't spotlight just one person to recognize for their actions. There were a number of heroic stories of people just doing their jobs. Loggers from Darrington went into the slide area looking for their neighbors. The community of Arlington came together to provide support. This bill is appropriate and would allow us to highlight special groups of individuals.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Pearson, prime sponsor.