

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1031

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
State Government & Elections, March 17, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to the medal of valor award presentation.

**Brief Description:** Modifying medal of valor award presentation requirements.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Low, Ryu, Schmidt, Christian, Reeves and Ramos.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 1/26/23, 93-0.

**Committee Activity:** State Government & Elections: 2/17/23, 3/17/23 [DP].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the requirement that the Medal of Valor presentation must occur during a joint session of the Legislature.
- Removes the requirement that the Governor is only able to delegate presentation of the Medal of Valor during times of disability or illness.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier, Fortunato, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

**Staff:** Megan Tudor (786-7478)

**Background:** The state Medal of Valor is an award presented to a person or group of individuals who have saved, or attempted to save, the life of another at the risk of serious injury or death to themselves. Recipients of the award are selected by the State Medal of Valor Committee, which consists of the Governor, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, or their designees. The

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committee meets annually to consider candidates for the award, and any individual may nominate a resident or group of residents of the state for the award. The award may not be given to any individual who acted during the course of their duties while serving in the following professions and employed by a government entity within the state: law enforcement, firefighter, search and rescue, or other hazardous professions. There have been 12 recipients of the award to date.

The award is presented to recipients by the Governor, who may present the award only during a joint session of the Legislature. The Governor may delegate presentation of the award to other members of the committee if the Governor is unable to present the award due to disability or illness.

**Summary of Bill:** The Medal of Valor may be presented at any time, regardless of whether the Legislature is in joint session. The Governor may delegate presentation of the Medal of Valor at any time the Governor is unable to present it.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: In Washington there are people that do incredible things, and every once in a while they go above and beyond while putting their own life at risk to save the life of somebody else. The Medal of Valor is one of three top awards in the state presented to citizens. This bill makes it easier for people to receive this award by allowing the award presentation to occur during private ceremonies, instead of only during a Joint Legislative Session. This is not a Secretary of State request bill.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Sam Low, Prime Sponsor; Brian Hatfield, Office of Secretary of State.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.