

Legislative Analysis



MICHIGAN LEGISLATIVE STATE MEDAL PROGRAM

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 6118 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Beau Matthew LaFave

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

House Bill 6119 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Gregory Markkanen

House Bill 6120 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Sarah Anthony

House Bill 6121 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Tullio Liberati

Committee: Military, Veterans and Homeland Security
Complete to 5-23-22

SUMMARY:

House Bills 6118 to 6121 would each amend the Legislative Council Act to require the Legislative Council to establish and operate a legislative state medal program (HB 6121) under which legislature could award the Michigan Legislative Medal of Freedom (HB 6118), the Michigan Legislative Medal of Honor (HB 6119), and the Michigan Legislative Medal of Valor (HB 6120), which respectively would be the state's highest civilian medal, highest legislatively issued military award, and second-highest legislatively issued military award.

House Bill 6121 would require the Legislative Council to establish and operate the Michigan Legislative State Medal Program to administer the awarding of the medals described in House Bills 6118 to 6120. The council would have to establish rules to carry out the program.

The administrator of the Legislative Council, or the administrator's designee, would receive medal nominations submitted under the program and would have to maintain a website through which members of the public could submit medal nominations. Medal nominations would have to provide a written account of the occurrence warranting the awarding of the medal and any eyewitness statement, extract from official records, sketch, map, diagram, or photograph that supports and amplifies the facts in the written account.

After receiving a nomination containing the information described above, the administrator or the administrator's designee would have to submit the medal nomination and all supporting documents to the chairpersons of the House and Senate committees with responsibility for military and veterans affairs.

The administrator or designee would have to request more information from an individual who submits a medal nomination that does not contain the information described above.

In addition, a member of the legislature could submit a medal nomination to the chairpersons of the House and Senate committees with responsibility for military and veterans affairs.

Proposed MCL 4.113

House Bill 6118 would authorize the legislature to award, by concurrent resolution, the Michigan Legislative Medal of Freedom as the highest civilian medal of the state. The medal would be awarded under the program proposed by HB 6121.

The medal could be awarded to a living or deceased individual in recognition of a valorous or heroic deed performed in saving a life or in recognition of injury, death, or the threat of injury or death incurred in the service of Michigan or the individual's community or incurred on behalf of the health, welfare, or safety of other individuals in Michigan.

Upon passage of the concurrent resolution awarding the medal, the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader would have to award the medal in the presence of the legislator or legislators who sponsored the concurrent resolution and the representative and senator of the district where the individual being awarded the medal resides or (if deceased) last resided.

The administrator of the Legislative Council, or the administrator's designee, would have to submit four proposed designs for the medal to the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader, who together would determine the medal's final design.

Proposed MCL 4.1114

House Bill 6119 would authorize the legislature to award, by concurrent resolution, the Michigan Legislative Medal of Honor as the highest legislatively issued military award of the state. The medal would be awarded under the program proposed by HB 6121.

The medal could be awarded to a living or deceased *service member* who was born in this state, entered military service as a resident of this state, or died in this state and who voluntarily performs a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice involving risk of life that is so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the service member for gallantry and intrepidity above the service member's comrades. Awarding of the medal would have to be determined in accordance with the standard of extraordinary merit. The medal could be awarded only upon incontestable proof of performance of the deed.

Service member would mean a member or former member of the state military establishment, another state's military establishment, or the *United States Armed Forces*.

United States Armed Forces would mean the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve components.

The legislature could not award the medal to more than the following two individuals during a single legislative session:

- One service member who served between January 1, 1836, and December 31, 1955.
- One service member who served on or after January 1, 1956.

The legislature could determine that a recommendation does not meet the standards for awarding this medal. It also could determine that such a recommendation meets the standards for the Michigan Legislative Medal of Valor proposed by House Bill 6120.

Upon passage of the concurrent resolution awarding the medal, the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader would have to award the medal in the presence of the legislator or legislators who sponsored the concurrent resolution and the representative and senator of the district where the individual being awarded the medal resides or (if deceased) last resided.

The administrator of the Legislative Council, or the administrator's designee, would have to submit four proposed designs for the medal to the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader, who together would determine the medal's final design.

Proposed MCL 4.1115

House Bill 6120 would authorize the legislature to award, by concurrent resolution, the Michigan Legislative Medal of Valor as the second-highest legislatively issued military award of the state. The medal would be awarded under the program proposed by HB 6121.

The medal could be awarded to a living or deceased service member who was born in this state, entered military service as a resident of this state, or died in this state and who performs specific acts of bravery or outstanding courage, or who performs within an exceptionally short period of time a closely related series of heroic acts, if the acts involve personal hazard or danger and the voluntary risk of life and result in an accomplishment so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the service member apart from the service member's comrades or from other individuals in similar circumstances. Awarding of the medal would require a lesser degree of gallantry than awarding of the Michigan Legislative Medal of Honor described above, but would require that the acts be performed with marked distinction.

Upon passage of the concurrent resolution awarding the medal, the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader would have to award the medal in the presence of the legislator or legislators who sponsored the concurrent resolution and the representative and senator of the district where the individual being awarded the medal resides or (if deceased) last resided.

The administrator of the Legislative Council, or the administrator's designee, would have to submit four proposed designs for the medal to the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader, who together would determine the medal's final design.

Proposed MCL 4.1116

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills could increase costs for the Legislative Council by an unknown amount and would have no fiscal impact on local units of government. The amount of any increased costs to the Legislative Council would depend upon additional administrative costs and staff resources that may be required to establish and operate the Michigan Legislative State Medal Program, which would include the development, maintenance, and monitoring of the program website, the creation of four proposed medal designs for each of the medals, and the management of the nominating petitions and documents throughout the year.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.