

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R27017 YDB-F

S.B. 2291
By: Lucio
Veteran Affairs & Border Security
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties contend that Texas is in need of greater flexibility in the way that the state honors its citizens. S.B. 2291 seeks to address this issue by introducing into law the Texas Medal for the Defense of Freedom award.

S.B. 2291 amends Chapter 437, Government Code, to address several issues with citations, medals and awards that the governor or adjutant general may award to civilians and members of the Texas Military Forces.

In order to expand the number of awards that may be issued to civilians and address inconsistencies in the agency's statute, S.B. 2291 accomplishes several different aspects relating to state awards. S.B. 2291 codifies the Governor's Unit Citation, which is currently only in policy. In addition, S.B. 2291 amends the agency's current awards list to allow some of them to be issued to civilians, and also creates in statute the Texas Medal for the Defense of Freedom Award, mirroring the federal Secretary of Defense Medal for the Defense of Freedom.

The Texas Medal for the Defense of Freedom Award would be included among the medals for which the governor or adjutant general, if delegated the authority, may adopt policies and regulations relating to the award, which is to be awarded to any civilian who is killed or wounded by hostile action while serving under any competent authority of the Texas Military Department under conditions for which a service member would be eligible for receipt of the Texas Purple Heart Medal.

As proposed, S.B. 2291 amends current law relating to the Texas Medal for the Defense of Freedom award.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Reenacts Section 437.355(a), Government Code, as amended by Chapters 144 (H.B. 115) and 760 (H.B. 2108), Acts of the 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, and amends it, as follows:

(a) Authorizes the governor or adjutant general, if delegated the authority, to adopt policies and regulations relating to awarding the Texas Medal for the Defense of Freedom, which is required to be awarded to any civilian who is killed or wounded by hostile action while serving under any competent authority of the adjutant general's department under conditions for which a service member would be eligible for receipt of the Texas Purple Heart Medal. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Provides that, to the extent of any conflict, this Act prevails over another Act of the 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017, relating to nonsubstantive additions to and corrections in enacted codes.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2017.