

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6502

BILL NUMBER: HB 1142

NOTE PREPARED: Mar 4, 2024

BILL AMENDED: Jan 29, 2024

SUBJECT: Hoosier First Responder Medal of Honor.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Lucas

FIRST SPONSOR: Sen. Goode

BILL STATUS: As Passed Senate

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: This bill establishes the Hoosier First Responder Medal of Honor (medal). It provides that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) may determine an Indiana first responder is eligible for the Hoosier First Responder Medal of Honor if the Indiana first responder distinguishes themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of the Indiana first responder's life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an act of public service. It provides that, upon approval of a nomination by DHS, the department shall notify the entity employing the Indiana first responder or for which the Indiana first responder volunteers of the nomination. The bill also provides that the entity shall notify a member of the General Assembly who represents the district in which the entity is located of the Indiana First Responder's nomination. It provides that the member of the General Assembly shall recommend the Indiana First Responder for the medal to the Governor.

The bill provides that, if DHS determines that an Indiana First Responder nominated to the department does not meet the eligibility requirements to receive the medal, DHS may make recommendations to the entity that employs the Indiana First Responder or for which the Indiana First Responder volunteers of other forms of recognition for the Indiana First Responder.

The bill also provides that the Governor may award the medal to the Indiana First Responder or the Indiana First Responder's next of kin at a public ceremony.

Effective Date: July 1, 2024.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *Department of Homeland Security* – DHS would be responsible for designing and procuring the medal. The cost of each medal will vary depending on the design and fabrication

materials chosen as well as the number ordered, but each medal will likely cost between \$100 and \$200. Direct costs associated with the medals themselves are expected to be met through existing appropriations to DHS.

DHS would be responsible for developing eligibility criteria for the medal and administering the medal application process, including providing feedback to nominating departments if a nominee is not approved to receive the medal. The additional workload will depend on the award criteria adopted, the number of submissions received, the number of medals awarded, and whether medals will be awarded retroactively. The first year of implementation is likely to require additional work outside the routine administrative functions of DHS, especially if the decision is made to award medals retroactively. Existing staffing and resource levels, if currently being used to capacity, may be insufficient for full implementation. The additional funds and resources required could be supplied through existing staff and resources currently being used in another program or with new appropriations. Ultimately, the source of funds and resources required to satisfy the requirements of this bill will depend on legislative and administrative actions.

Office of the Governor – This bill authorizes, but does not require, the Governor to present the medal to the recipient or the recipient’s next of kin in a public ceremony. The workload for the Office of the Governor will increase according to how many medals are awarded and how many of those medals will be awarded in a public ceremony. The bill’s requirements are within the office’s routine administrative functions and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary office staffing and resource levels.

State Public Safety Agencies – State public safety agencies that nominate First Responders will experience a slight workload increase associated with the nomination process, but any increase is expected to be met within existing resources.

Additional Information: An average of 6 public safety officers die in the line of duty each year, and another 12 are estimated to incur serious disabilities in the line of duty. While not all public safety officers who are killed or incur serious disabilities will meet the requirements of the medal, and not all First Responders who receive the award will have been killed or injured during the incident for which they are nominated, the total number facilitates the estimation of serious injuries incurred in the line of duty annually. These numbers represent the probable upper limit for annual nominations.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Local Public Safety Agencies* – Local public safety agencies that nominate First Responders will experience a slight workload increase associated with the nomination process, but any increase is expected to be met within existing resources.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Public safety agencies.

Local Agencies Affected: Public safety agencies.

Information Sources: Andy Blough, Chief Actuary, INPRS;
https://www.in.gov/inprs/files/INPRSAnnualReportBook_FY23.pdf

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