

HOUSE BILL 1333

E4

6lr3312

By: **Delegate Bhandari**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026

Assigned to: Government, Labor, and Elections

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Safety – Maryland Law Enforcement Public Service Medal**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Maryland Law Enforcement Public Service Medal;
4 establishing eligibility requirements for the medal and procedures for nomination,
5 selection, and the awarding of the medal; requiring the Governor to honor certain
6 law enforcement officers at a certain ceremony; and generally relating to the
7 Maryland Law Enforcement Public Service Medal.

8 BY adding to

9 Article – Public Safety

10 Section 3–801 and 3–802 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 8. Maryland Law
11 Enforcement Public Service Medal”

12 Annotated Code of Maryland

13 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 Preamble

15 WHEREAS, The State of Maryland recognizes the extraordinary bravery and
16 commitment of law enforcement officers who risk their lives to protect and serve the public;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Law enforcement officers often face dangerous and life–threatening
19 situations in their duty to safeguard communities; and

20 WHEREAS, The heroic actions of Sergeant Paul Pastorek, Corporal Jeremy Herbert,
21 Senior Officer William Kinsey, Officer Timothy Baublitz, and Officer Garry Kirts during
22 the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge on March 26, 2024, demonstrated unparalleled
23 courage and selflessness in saving lives during a tragic crisis; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 WHEREAS, The Maryland General Assembly seeks to establish a formal recognition
2 for officers who display extraordinary valor, sacrifice, and dedication to public safety; now,
3 therefore,

4 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
5 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

6 **Article – Public Safety**

7 **SUBTITLE 8. MARYLAND LAW ENFORCEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE MEDAL.**

8 **3–801.**

9 (A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
10 INDICATED.

11 (B) “MEDAL” MEANS THE MARYLAND LAW ENFORCEMENT PUBLIC
12 SERVICE MEDAL.

13 (C) “SECRETARY” MEANS THE SECRETARY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND
14 CORRECTIONAL SERVICES.

15 **3–802.**

16 (A) (1) THERE IS A MARYLAND LAW ENFORCEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE
17 MEDAL.

18 (2) THE MEDAL IS THE HIGHEST STATE HONOR AWARDED TO LAW
19 ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE, VALOR, AND
20 HEROISM.

21 (B) (1) THE GOVERNOR MAY AWARD THE MEDAL TO SWORN LAW
22 ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS IN MARYLAND WHO:

23 (I) HAVE DEMONSTRATED ACTS OF EXTRAORDINARY
24 COURAGE, BRAVERY, OR SELFLESSNESS WHILE ON DUTY;

25 (II) HAVE RISKED OR SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES BY SAVING
26 LIVES, PREVENTING SIGNIFICANT CRIMES, OR RESPONDING TO CRITICAL
27 EMERGENCIES; OR

28 (III) HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED PUBLIC SAFETY,
29 INCLUDING RESPONDING TO DISASTERS, TERRORIST THREATS, OR SIGNIFICANT
30 PUBLIC EMERGENCIES.

1 **(2) THE GOVERNOR MAY AWARD NOT MORE THAN FIVE MEDALS PER**
2 **CALENDAR YEAR.**

3 **(3) WHEN AN OFFICER IS AWARDED A MEDAL POSTHUMOUSLY, THE**
4 **OFFICER'S NEXT OF KIN MAY RECEIVE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AND**
5 **COMMENDATION ON THE OFFICER'S BEHALF.**

6 **(C) (1) A MEDAL REVIEW COMMITTEE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN**
7 **THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES TO**
8 **EVALUATE NOMINATIONS AND SELECT RECIPIENTS FOR THE MEDAL.**

9 **(2) THE MEDAL REVIEW COMMITTEE SHALL CONSIST OF:**

10 **(I) THE SECRETARY, WHO SHALL SERVE AS THE CHAIR OF THE**
11 **COMMITTEE;**

12 **(II) THE SECRETARY OF STATE POLICE;**

13 **(III) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MARYLAND POLICE**
14 **TRAINING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION, CHOSEN BY THE SECRETARY;**

15 **(IV) ONE MEMBER OF THE SENATE OF MARYLAND, CHOSEN BY**
16 **THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE;**

17 **(V) ONE MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, CHOSEN BY**
18 **THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE; AND**

19 **(VI) ONE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE WITH EXPERIENCE**
20 **WORKING IN LAW ENFORCEMENT OR PUBLIC SAFETY, CHOSEN BY THE SECRETARY.**

21 **(3) THE COMMITTEE SHALL:**

22 **(I) REVIEW NOMINATIONS SUBMITTED BY:**

23 1. **STATE AND LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES;**

24 2. **STATE AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS; AND**

25 3. **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVILIANS; AND**

26 **(II) ANNUALLY SUBMIT A LIST OF NOT MORE THAN FIVE**
27 **RECOMMENDED AWARDEES TO THE GOVERNOR FOR FINAL APPROVAL.**

1 **(D) (1) THE GOVERNOR SHALL PRESENT THE MEDALS IN AN OFFICIAL**
2 **STATE CEREMONY HELD ANNUALLY IN ANNAPOLIS.**

3 **(2) AT THE CEREMONY, EACH MEDAL RECIPIENT SHALL RECEIVE:**

4 **(I) A GOLD MEDALLION BEARING THE STATE SEAL;**

5 **(II) A CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION SIGNED BY THE**
6 **GOVERNOR AND THE PRESIDING OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; AND**

7 **(III) A PERMANENT MARYLAND PUBLIC SERVICE HONOR ROLL**
8 **LISTING HOUSED AT THE STATE HOUSE.**

9 **(E) MEDAL PRODUCTION AND CEREMONY EXPENSES SHALL BE FUNDED**
10 **THROUGH:**

11 **(1) AN ANNUAL APPROPRIATION CONTAINED IN THE STATE BUDGET;**
12 **AND**

13 **(2) GRANTS, PRIVATE SPONSORSHIPS, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**
14 **FOUNDATION SUPPORT.**

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the following individuals shall
16 be awarded the Maryland Law Enforcement Public Service Medal at the first annual
17 Maryland Law Enforcement Public Service Medal ceremony in recognition of contributions
18 made during the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge:

19 (1) Sergeant Paul Pastorek;

20 (2) Corporal Jeremy Herbert;

21 (3) Senior Officer William Kinsey;

22 (4) Officer Timothy Baublitz; and

23 (5) Officer Garry Kirts.

24 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
25 October 1, 2026.