

Public Law 96-114
96th Congress

An Act

To establish a Congressional Award Board to administer a Congressional Award Program designed to encourage initiative and achievement among youths.

Nov. 16, 1979
[H.R. 2196]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Congressional
Award Act.

SHORT TITLE

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "Congressional Award Act".

2 USC 801 note.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL AWARD BOARD

SEC. 2. There is established a board to be known as the Congressional Award Board (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "Board"), which shall be responsible for administering the Congressional Award Program described under section 3 of this Act. The Board shall not be an agency or instrumentality of the United States, and the United States is not liable for any obligation or liability incurred by the Board.

2 USC 801.

CONGRESSIONAL AWARD PROGRAM

SEC. 3. (a) The Board shall establish and administer a program to be known as the Congressional Award Program, which shall be designed to promote initiative, achievement, and excellence among youths in the areas of public service, personal development, and physical and expedition fitness. Under the program gold, silver, and bronze medals shall be awarded to young people within the United States, aged fourteen through twenty-three (subject to such exceptions as the Board may prescribe), who have satisfied the standards of achievement established by the Board under subsection (b) of this section. The medals shall be of such design and materials as the Board may determine.

2 USC 802.

(b) In carrying out the Congressional Award Program, the Board shall—

(1) establish the standards of achievement required for young people to qualify as recipients of the medals and establish such procedures as may be required to verify that individuals satisfy such qualifications;

(2) designate the recipients of the medals in accordance with the standards established under paragraph (1) of this subsection;

(3) delineate such roles as the Board considers to be appropriate for the Director and Regional Directors in administering the Congressional Award, and set forth in the bylaws of the Board the duties, salaries, and benefits of the Director and Regional Directors;

(4) raise funds for the operation of the program; and

(5) take such other actions as may be appropriate for the administration of the Congressional Award Program.

(c) The Board shall arrange for the presentation of the awards to the recipients and shall provide for participation by Members of

Congress in such presentation, when appropriate. To the extent possible, recipients shall be provided with opportunities to exchange information and views with Members of Congress during the presentation of the awards.

Scholarships.

(d) The Board may award scholarships in such amounts as the Board determines to be appropriate to any recipient of the Congressional Award Gold Medal.

Report to Congress.

(e) The Board shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Congress before March 1 of each year summarizing the activities of the Congressional Award Program during the previous year and making appropriate recommendations. Any minority views and recommendations of members of the Board shall be included in such reports. The annual report shall contain the following items:

(1) Specific information regarding the methods used to raise funds for the Congressional Award Program and a list of the sources of all money raised by the Board.

(2) Detailed information regarding the expenditures made by the Board, including the percentage of funds which are used for administrative expenses.

(3) A description of the programs formulated by the Director under section 5(b)(1), including an explanation of the operation of such programs and a list of their sponsors.

(4) A detailed list of the administrative expenditures made by the Board, including the amounts expended for salaries, travel expenses, and reimbursed expenses.

(5) A list of individuals given awards under the program, and their place of residence.

(6) Such other information as the Board may consider significant.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

2 USC 803.

SEC. 4. (a)(1) The Board shall consist of seventeen members, as follows:

(A) Four members appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(B) Four members appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(C) Four members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(D) Four members appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(E) The Director of the Board, who shall serve as a nonvoting member.

(2) In making appointments to the Board, the congressional leadership shall consider recommendations submitted by any interested party, including any member of the Board or the Committee for the Establishment and Promotion of the Congressional Award.

(3) Individuals appointed to the Board shall have an interest in one or more of the fields of concern of the Congressional Award Program.

(b) Appointed members of the Board shall serve for terms of six years, except that of the members first appointed—

(1) five shall serve for terms of two years;

(2) five shall serve for terms of four years; and

(3) six shall serve for terms of six years;

as determined by lot when all such members have been appointed.

(c)(1) Any vacancy in the Board shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

(2) Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which his predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of such term.

(3) Any appointed member of the Board may continue to serve after the expiration of his term until his successor has taken office.

(4) Vacancies in the membership of the Board shall not affect its power to function if there remain sufficient members to constitute a quorum under subsection (d) of this section.

(d) A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

(e) Members of the Board shall serve without pay but may be compensated for reasonable travel expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members of the Board.

(f) The Board shall meet annually at the call of the Chairman and at such other times as the Chairman may determine to be appropriate. The Chairman shall call a meeting of the Board whenever one-third of the members of the Board submit written requests for such a meeting.

(g) The Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Board shall be elected from among the members of the Board by a majority vote of the Board for such terms as the Board determines. The Vice Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in his absence.

(h)(1) The Board may appoint such committees, and assign to the committees such functions, as may be appropriate to assist the Board in carrying out its duties under this Act. Members of such committees may include the members of the Board or such other qualified individuals as the Board may select.

(2) Any employee or officer of the Federal Government may serve as a member of a committee created by the Board, but may not receive compensation for services performed for such a committee.

(i) The Board shall establish such bylaws and other regulations as may be appropriate to enable the Board to carry out its functions under this Act.

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

SEC. 5. (a) In the administration of the Congressional Award Program, the Board shall be assisted by a Director, who shall be the principal executive of the program and who shall supervise the affairs of the Board. The Director shall be appointed by a majority vote of the Board, and shall serve for such term as the Board may determine. The Director may be removed by a majority vote of the Board. 2 USC 804.

(b) The Director shall, in consultation with the Board—

(1) formulate programs to carry out the policies of the Congressional Award Program;

(2) establish such divisions within the Congressional Award Program as may be appropriate; and

(3) employ and provide for the compensation of such personnel as may be necessary to carry out the Congressional Award Program, subject to such policies as the Board shall prescribe under its bylaws.

REGIONAL AWARD DIRECTORS

SEC. 6. Regional award directors may be appointed by the Board, upon recommendation of the Director, for any State or other appropriate geographic area of the United States. The Director shall make such recommendations with respect to a State or geographic area only after soliciting recommendations regarding such appointments 2 USC 805.

from public and private youth organizations within such State or geographic area.

POWERS AND RESTRICTIONS

2 USC 806.

SEC. 7. (a) Subject to such limitations as may be provided for under this section, the Board may take such actions and make such expenditures as may be necessary to carry out the Congressional Award Program, except that—

(1) the Board shall carry out its functions and make expenditures with only such resources as are available to the Board from sources other than the Federal Government; and

(2) the Board shall not take any actions which would disqualify the Board from treatment (for tax purposes) as an organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

26 USC 501.

Contracts.

(b) The Board may enter into and perform such contracts as may be appropriate to carry out its business, but the Board may not enter into any contract which would obligate the Board to expend an amount greater than the amount available to the Board for the purpose of such contract during the fiscal year in which the expenditure is made.

Funds.

(c) The Board may seek and accept, from sources other than the Federal Government, funds and other resources to carry out its activities. The Board may not accept any funds or other resources which are—

(1) donated with a restriction on their use unless such restriction merely provides that such funds or other resources be used in furtherance of the Congressional Award Program; or

(2) donated subject to the condition that the identity of the donor of the funds or resources shall remain anonymous.

(d) The Board may accept and utilize the services of voluntary, uncompensated personnel.

(e) The Board may lease (or otherwise hold), acquire, or dispose of real or personal property necessary for, or relating to, the duties of the Board.

(f) The Board shall have no power—

(1) to issue bonds, notes, debentures, or other similar obligations creating long-term indebtedness;

(2) to issue any share of stock or to declare or pay any dividends; or

(3) to provide for any part of the income or assets of the Board to inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or employee of the Board except as reasonable compensation for services or reimbursement for expenses.

(g)(1) The Board shall provide for the establishment of a private nonprofit corporation for the sole purpose of assisting the Board to carry out the Congressional Award Program, and shall delegate to the corporation such duties as it considers appropriate.

(2) The articles of incorporation of the corporation established under this subsection shall provide that—

(A) the members of the Board of Directors of the corporation shall be the members of the Board, and the Director of the corporation shall be the Director of the Board; and

(B) the extent of the authority of the corporation shall be the same as that of the Board.

(3) No director, officer, or employee of any corporation established under this subsection may receive compensation, travel expenses, or benefits from both the corporation and the Board.

AUDITS

SEC. 8. The financial records of the Board and of any corporation established under section 7(g) may be audited by the Comptroller General of the United States (hereinafter in this section referred to as the "Comptroller General") at such times as the Comptroller General may determine to be appropriate. The Comptroller General, or any duly authorized representative of the Comptroller General, shall have access for the purpose of audit to any books, documents, papers, and records of the Board or such corporation (or any agent of the Board or such corporation) which, in the opinion of the Comptroller General, may be pertinent to the Congressional Award Program.

2 USC 807.

TERMINATION OF BOARD

SEC. 9. The Board shall terminate six years after the date of the enactment of this Act. Upon termination of the Board, the Board shall take such actions as may be required to provide for the dissolution of any corporation established by the Board under section 7(g). The Board shall set forth, in its bylaws, the procedures for dissolution to be followed by the Board.

2 USC 808.

Approved November 16, 1979.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 96-518 (Comm. on Education and Labor).

SENATE REPORT No. 96-245 accompanying S. 221 (Comm. on Governmental Affairs).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 125 (1979):

Oct. 29, considered and passed House.

Nov. 1, considered and passed Senate.