

By Mr. Moore, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 688) of Richard T. Moore, Carol A. Donovan, Bruce E. Tarr, Scott P. Brown, other members of the General Court and others for legislation to prohibit the sale of abandoned military medals and decorations. Human Services and Elderly Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and One.

AN ACT PROHIBITING THE SALE OF ABANDONED MILITARY MEDALS AND DECORATIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 *Whereas*, The deferred operation of this act would tend to
2 defeat its purpose, which is forthwith to protect and honor the
3 bravery and memory of those who have served in the United
4 States armed forces by prohibiting the sale of abandoned property
5 in the form of military honor medals, to include decorations, cam-
6 paign and service medals, therefore, it is hereby declared to be an
7 emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the
8 public trust.

1 SECTION 1. The general court finds that:

2 (a) members of the United States armed forces have consis-
3 tently answered their nation's call to duty with honor and bravery;

4 (b) citizens of the commonwealth serve proudly and with dis-
5 tinction in every branch of the United States armed forces;

6 (c) citizens of the commonwealth have been recognized for
7 their distinguished service by being honored through the awarding
8 of Purple Hearts, Silver Stars and Medals of Honor, among other
9 commendations and awards;

10 (d) military awards and decorations are irreplaceable and are
11 unique symbols of the patriotism and distinguished heroism
12 shown by our men and women while serving in uniform;

13 (e) military awards and decorations are a crucial part of a
14 family's heritage and history;

15 (f) military awards and decorations are also an important part of
16 the heritage and culture of the commonwealth.

1 SECTION 2. Section 9 of chapter 200A of the General Laws,
2 as appearing in the 1998 Official Edition, is hereby amended by
3 adding the following subsection:—

4 (g) Notwithstanding subsections (a) to (f), inclusive, all
5 escheated property consisting of military honor medals, decora-
6 tions, campaign and service medals that are surrendered to the
7 state treasurer shall, after one year of their delivery to her, be
8 transferred by the state treasurer to the commissioner of veterans
9 services who shall, within 30 days of receipt of said medals and
10 decorations, catalogue and forward them to the Massachusetts
11 National Guard Museum. The Massachusetts National Guard
12 Museum shall put on permanent display such medals and decora-
13 tions. The museum shall destroy, in a manner consistent with the
14 United States armed forces' disposal practices for the American
15 flag and other items of like patriotic significance should said
16 medals and decoration be taken off display or are unsuitable for
17 display due to wear and tear.