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Senate Bill 578 (as enrolled)  
Sponsor: Senator Bruce Patterson  
Senate Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs  
House Committee: Government Operations

Date Completed: 7-17-03

### **RATIONALE**

In the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, much has been written and said about the heroic efforts of those who risked, and those who gave, their lives to protect the lives and safety of others. These events and the subsequent reports renewed the public's interest in recognizing and celebrating individuals who display heroic traits. Some people believe that there are many unrecognized heroes in the nation and within local communities. It has been suggested that the State establish an American heroes week and that academic institutions be encouraged to teach students about local heroes.

### **CONTENT**

The bill would create a new act to establish "American heroes week" in the State, and encourage academic institutions to educate children about local heroes and role models. American Heroes Week would be the calendar week in which September 11 fell each year.

The bill provides that the Legislature would recognize that many ordinary Americans showed heroism on September 11, 2001, and the days that followed. The bill contains the following statements:

The legislature declares that American heroes week is a fitting tribute to the many individuals who displayed extraordinary altruism, compassion, courage, integrity, dedication, and selflessness during and after the terrorist attacks against the United States that occurred on September 11, 2001.

The legislature declares that American heroes week is a fitting tribute to the many individuals who display extraordinary altruism, compassion, courage, integrity, dedication, and selflessness in their daily work, behavior, and accomplishments.

### **ARGUMENTS**

*(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)*

#### **Supporting Argument**

In today's culture, actors, musicians, athletes, entertainers, and occasionally a politician or religious leader, dominate the headlines. These people often become adults' and children's heroes, but they are often not admirable or heroic. The events of 9-11 taught, or reminded the public that ordinary people doing their everyday jobs can do extraordinary, heroic deeds. This lesson should not be forgotten. Young people should be educated about and encouraged to study those in the community who, in their daily activities, show selflessness, integrity, and compassion, and perform ennobling deeds. It is important for young people to have local role models to inspire and encourage them. By establishing an American Heroes Week to coincide with September 11 each year, the bill would create an opportunity for schools, and communities, to recognize individuals who display great character in their everyday lives.

Legislative Analyst: George Towne

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.