§ 8.11. New York state Walt Whitman citation of merit for poets. 1. The governor shall biennially present the New York state Walt Whitman citation of merit to a distinguished New York poet upon the recommendation of the panel constituted in this section. The poet selected shall be considered the state poet and the citation shall carry an honorarium of ten thousand dollars.

2. The institute shall biennially appoint and convene an advisory panel of distinguished poets and persons with particular expertise in the field of poetry. The director of the institute shall be a permanent member of the advisory panel and each current state poet shall serve as a member of the panel in choosing the next New York state Walt Whitman poet. The panel shall recommend to the governor a poet whose achievements make him or her deserving of such recognition.

3. The state poet shall promote and encourage poetry within the state and shall give two public readings within the state each year.

4. The institute shall establish such procedures and guidelines as are necessary to effect the provisions of this section.