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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 581 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY WARD, SCAVELLO, FONTANA, VULAKOVICH, YUDICHAK,  
BAKER, HUTCHINSON, MENSCH AND COSTA, APRIL 15, 2015

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REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,  
APRIL 15, 2015

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 24, 1976 (P.L.424, No.101), entitled,  
2 as amended, "An act providing for the payment of death  
3 benefits to the surviving spouse or children or parents of  
4 firefighters, ambulance service or rescue squad members, law  
5 enforcement officers or National Guard members who die as a  
6 result of the performance of their duties," providing for the  
7 payment of death benefits.

8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 Section 1. Section 1(a) of the act of June 24, 1976  
11 (P.L.424, No.101), referred to as the Emergency and Law  
12 Enforcement Personnel Death Benefits Act, amended October 9,  
13 2009 (P.L.588, No.51), is amended to read:

14 Section 1. (a) In the event a law enforcement officer,  
15 ambulance service or rescue squad member, firefighter, certified  
16 hazardous material response team member or National Guard member  
17 dies as a result of the performance of his duties, [such  
18 political subdivision, Commonwealth agency or, in the case of  
19 National Guard members, the Adjutant General, or, in the case of  
20 a member of a Commonwealth law enforcement agency, the

1 authorized survivor or the agency head, within 90 days from the  
2 date of death, shall submit certification of such death to the  
3 Commonwealth.] an application, including a certification of  
4 death, shall be made to the department within three years of the  
5 date of such death by any of the following:

6 (1) A political subdivision.

7 (2) A Commonwealth agency.

8 (3) In the case of National Guard members, the Adjutant  
9 General.

10 (4) In the case of a member of a Commonwealth law  
11 enforcement agency, the agency head.

12 (5) In the case of a campus police officer, the university  
13 or college president.

14 (6) Any survivor eligible for payment of benefits under this  
15 act, or individual authorized to act on the survivor's behalf.

16 \* \* \*

17 Section 2. The definition of "firefighter, ambulance service  
18 or rescue squad member or law enforcement officer" in section 2  
19 of the act, amended October 6, 2005 (P.L.319, No.59), is amended  
20 and the section is amended by adding a definition to read:

21 Section 2. The following words and phrases when used in this  
22 act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless  
23 the context clearly indicates otherwise:

24 \* \* \*

25 "Department." The Department of General Services of the  
26 Commonwealth.

27 "Firefighter, ambulance service or rescue squad member or law  
28 enforcement officer" means a firefighter; a member of a  
29 volunteer fire company; a member of an ambulance service or  
30 rescue squad; a peace officer as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 501

1 (relating to definitions); a public servant concerned in  
2 official detention as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 5121 (relating to  
3 escape); an officer or employee of a State correctional  
4 institution; guards or employees of county jails and prisons;  
5 campus police as defined in section 2416.1(d) of the act of  
6 April 9, 1929 (P.L.117, No.175), known as The Administrative  
7 Code of 1929, or campus police as defined in section 2001-A(20)  
8 of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the  
9 Public School Code of 1949; or any other law enforcement officer  
10 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or of any political  
11 subdivision thereof.

12 \* \* \*

13 Section 3. The amendment of section 1(a) of the act shall  
14 apply to an individual whose date of death occurs before, on or  
15 after the effective date of this section.

16 Section 4. This act shall take effect immediately.