
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 906 Session of
2007

INTRODUCED BY LENTZ, MELIO, DeWEESE, SOLOBAY, ARGALL, BELFANTI, BENNINGHOFF, BIANCUCCI, BOYD, CALTAGIRONE, CARROLL, CAUSER, CIVERA, CONKLIN, CREIGHTON, CURRY, DALLY, DePASQUALE, FABRIZIO, FLECK, GALLOWAY, GEORGE, GERBER, GINGRICH, GRELL, GRUCELA, HARPER, HERSHEY, HESS, HICKERNELL, HORNAMAN, HUTCHINSON, KILLION, KING, KIRKLAND, KORTZ, KOTIK, KULA, LEACH, LEVDANSKY, MAHONEY, McCALL, McILHATTAN, MENSCH, MICOZZIE, MUNDY, MURT, MUSTIO, MYERS, NAILOR, M. O'BRIEN, PALLONE, PAYNE, PETRARCA, PETRONE, PHILLIPS, PICKETT, PYLE, RAMALEY, READSHAW, RUBLEY, SAINATO, SANTONI, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, SHAPIRO, McILVAINE SMITH, R. STEVENSON, STURLA, SURRA, R. TAYLOR, VEREB, VULAKOVICH, WALKO, WANSACZ, WATERS, WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD, ADOLPH, COSTA, THOMAS, EVERETT, KENNEY, J. WHITE, MILNE, SIPTROTH, FAIRCHILD, ROAE, RAPP, BROOKS, KESSLER, QUINN, K. SMITH, REICHLEY, PERRY AND PEIFER, MARCH 22, 2007

SENATOR ARMSTRONG, APPROPRIATIONS, IN SENATE, RE-REPORTED AS AMENDED, JUNE 12, 2007

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of July 31, 2003 (P.L.73, No.17), entitled "An
2 act establishing a grant program for volunteer fire companies
3 and volunteer ambulance services; and providing for grant
4 funding," further defining "volunteer ambulance service";
5 further providing for guidelines and procedures, for award of
6 grants and for expiration of authority; providing for
7 publication and notice, for special provisions; and repealing
8 an obsolete act.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. The definition of "volunteer ambulance service"
12 in section 102 of the act of July 31, 2003 (P.L.73, No.17),

1 known as the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance
2 Service Grant Act, is amended to read:

3 Section 102. Definitions.

4 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
5 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
6 context clearly indicates otherwise:

7 * * *

8 "Volunteer ambulance service." Any nonprofit chartered
9 corporation, association or organization located in this
10 Commonwealth, which is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department
11 of Health and is not associated or affiliated with any hospital
12 and which is regularly engaged in the provision of emergency
13 medical services, including basic life support or advanced life
14 support services and [the transportation of patients within this
15 Commonwealth.] advanced life support squads as defined in 28 Pa.
16 Code § 1005.1 (relating to general provisions). The term shall
17 not include any corporation, association or organization that is
18 primarily engaged in the operation of invalid coaches which are
19 intended for the routine transport of persons who are
20 convalescent or otherwise nonambulatory and do not ordinarily
21 require emergency medical treatment while in transit.

22 * * *

23 Section 2. Section 302 of the act is repealed:

24 [Section 302. Guidelines and procedures.

25 The agency shall develop guidelines, procedures and all
26 applications necessary to implement the grant program. The
27 agency shall submit the guidelines, procedures and applications
28 to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the
29 Pennsylvania Code and Bulletin within 30 days of the effective
30 date of this act.]

1 Section 3. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

2 Section 302.1. Publication and notice.

3 The agency shall publish notice of the grant program
4 availability through the Legislative Reference Bureau for
5 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin:

6 (1) within 30 days of the effective date of this section
7 for the fiscal period beginning July 1, 2006, and ending June <—
8 30, 2008 YEARS BEGINNING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007; and <—

9 (2) by August 8 for fiscal years beginning after June
10 30, 2008.

11 Section 4. Section 303 of the act, amended February 21, 2006
12 (P.L.38, No.13), is amended to read:

13 Section 303. Award of grants.

14 (a) Authorization.--The agency is hereby authorized to make
15 a grant award to each eligible volunteer fire company for the
16 following:

17 (1) Construction and/or renovation of the fire company's
18 facility and purchase or repair of fixtures and furnishings
19 necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the
20 company to provide fire, ambulance and rescue services.

21 (2) Repair of firefighting, ambulance or rescue
22 equipment or purchase thereof.

23 (3) Debt reduction associated with paragraph (1) or (2).

24 (4) Training and certification of members.

25 (b) Limits.--

26 (1) Except as provided in paragraph (3), grants shall be
27 not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$15,000 per volunteer
28 fire company. ~~The minimum and maximum amounts of grants shall~~ <—
29 ~~be doubled for the fiscal period beginning July 1, 2006, and~~
30 ~~ending June 30, 2008.~~

1 (2) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the
2 total dollar amount of approved applications exceeds the
3 amount of funds appropriated by the General Assembly for this
4 purpose.

5 (3) In a municipality where there are two or more
6 volunteer fire companies and if two or more fire companies
7 consolidated their use of equipment, firefighters and
8 services [after July 1, 1998, each entity from which the
9 consolidated entity was created will be eligible for a grant
10 as though it had not consolidated.] within five years
11 preceding the date of the current year application submission
12 deadline, the consolidated entity shall be deemed eligible to
13 receive a grant not to exceed the amount of the combined
14 total for which the individual companies would have been
15 eligible had they not consolidated.

16 (c) Time for filing application and department action.--

17 [(1) The agency shall provide written instructions and
18 guidelines for grants under this act to the fire chief and
19 president of every volunteer fire company in this
20 Commonwealth on or before February 28, 2006.

21 (2) Volunteer fire companies seeking grants under this
22 act shall submit completed applications to the agency on or
23 before April 30, 2006. The agency shall act to approve or
24 disapprove the application by June 30, 2006. Applications
25 which have not been approved or disapproved by the agency by
26 June 30, 2006, shall be deemed approved.]

27 ~~(1) By September 1 of each year,~~ WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE <—
28 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDATORY ACT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS
29 BEGINNING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007, AND BY SEPTEMBER 1
30 OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, the agency shall provide written

1 instructions for grants under this act to the fire chief and
2 president of every volunteer fire company in this
3 Commonwealth.

4 (2) ~~By September 8 of each year,~~ WITHIN 45 DAYS OF THE ←
5 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDATORY ACT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS
6 BEGINNING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007, AND BY SEPTEMBER 8
7 OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, the agency shall provide
8 applications to the fire chief and president of every
9 volunteer fire company. THE APPLICATION FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ←
10 COMMENCING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007, SHALL BE A
11 COMBINED APPLICATION. Volunteer fire companies seeking grants
12 under this act shall submit completed applications to the
13 agency. The application period shall remain open for 45 days
14 each year. The agency shall act to approve or disapprove
15 applications within 60 days of the application submission
16 deadline each year. Applications which have not been approved
17 or disapproved by the agency within 60 days after the close
18 of the application period each year shall be deemed approved.

19 (d) Eligibility.--To receive grant funds under this act, a
20 volunteer fire company shall have actively responded to one or
21 more fire or rescue emergencies [since July 1, 2005,] during the
22 previous calendar year and must [sign] have signed and be under
23 an agreement to actively participate in the Pennsylvania Fire
24 Information Reporting System which is administered by the
25 agency.

26 Section 5. Section 502 of the act is repealed:

27 [Section 502. Guidelines and procedures.

28 The agency shall develop guidelines, procedures and all
29 applications necessary to implement the grant program. The
30 agency shall submit the guidelines, procedures and applications

1 to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the
2 Pennsylvania Code and Bulletin within 30 days of the effective
3 date of this act.]

4 Section 6. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

5 Section 502.1. Publication and notice.

6 The agency shall publish notice of the grant program
7 availability through the Legislative Reference Bureau for
8 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin:

9 (1) within 30 days of the effective date of this section
10 for the fiscal period beginning July 1, 2006, and ending June <—
11 30, 2008 YEARS BEGINNING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007; and <—

12 (2) by August 8 for fiscal years beginning after June
13 30, 2008.

14 Section 7. Sections 503 and 901 of the act, amended February
15 21, 2006 (P.L.38, No.13), are amended to read:

16 Section 503. Award of grants.

17 (a) Authorization.--The agency is hereby authorized to make
18 a grant award to each eligible volunteer ambulance service for
19 the following:

20 (1) Construction and/or renovation of the volunteer
21 ambulance service's facility and purchase or repair of
22 fixtures, furnishings, office equipment and support services
23 necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the
24 ambulance service to provide ambulance, emergency medical,
25 basic life support and advanced life support services.

26 (2) Repair of ambulance equipment or purchase thereof.

27 (3) Debt reduction associated with paragraph (1) or (2).

28 (4) Training and certification of members.

29 (b) Limits.--

30 (1) Grants shall be not less than \$2,500 and not more

1 than \$10,000 per volunteer ambulance service. ~~The minimum and~~ ←
2 ~~maximum amount of grants shall be doubled for the fiscal~~
3 ~~period beginning July 1, 2006, and ending June 30, 2008.~~

4 (2) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the
5 total dollar amount of approved applications exceeds the
6 amount of funds appropriated by the General Assembly for this
7 purpose.

8 (3) If two or more volunteer ambulance services
9 consolidated their use of equipment, personnel and services
10 [after July 1, 1998, each entity from which the consolidated
11 entity was created will be eligible for a grant as though it
12 had not consolidated.] within five years preceding the date
13 of the current year application submission deadline, the
14 consolidated entity shall be deemed eligible to receive a
15 grant not to exceed the amount of the combined total for
16 which the individual companies would have been eligible had
17 they not consolidated.

18 (c) Time for filing application and department action.--

19 [(1) The agency shall provide written instructions and
20 guidelines for grants under this act to the president of
21 every volunteer ambulance service in this Commonwealth on or
22 before February 28, 2006.

23 (2) Volunteer ambulance services seeking grants under
24 this chapter shall submit completed applications to the
25 agency on or before April 30, 2006. The agency shall act to
26 approve or disapprove the application by June 30, 2006.
27 Applications which have not been approved or disapproved by
28 the agency by June 30, 2006, shall be deemed approved.]

29 ~~(1) By September 1 of each year,~~ ←
30 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS AMENDATORY ACT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS

1 COMMENCING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007, AND BY SEPTEMBER 1
2 OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, the agency shall provide written
3 instructions for grants under this act to the president of
4 every volunteer ambulance service in this Commonwealth.

5 (2) ~~By~~ WITHIN 45 DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS <—
6 AMENDATORY ACT FOR THE FISCAL YEARS COMMENCING JULY 1, 2006,
7 AND JULY 1, 2007, AND BY September 8 of each year, the agency
8 shall provide applications to the president of every
9 volunteer ambulance service. THE APPLICATION FOR THE FISCAL <—
10 YEARS COMMENCING JULY 1, 2006, AND JULY 1, 2007, SHALL BE A
11 COMBINED APPLICATION. Volunteer ambulance services seeking
12 grants under this act shall submit completed applications to
13 the agency. The application period shall remain open for 45
14 days each year. The agency shall act to approve or disapprove
15 applications within 60 days of the application submission
16 deadline each year. Applications which have not been approved
17 or disapproved by the agency within 60 days after the close
18 of the application period each year shall be deemed approved.

19 Section 901. Expiration of authority.

20 The authority of the agency to award grants under Chapters 3
21 and 5 shall expire June 30, [2007] 2012.

22 Section 8. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

23 Section 901.1. Special provisions.

24 (a) Claim.--An applicant for a grant under this act who
25 failed to return a signed agreement for the preceding year shall
26 not be permitted to apply for a grant in the current year,
27 unless the applicant has provided the commissioner with a
28 reasonable written explanation as to why it did not claim its
29 grant.

30 (b) Delinquency.--An applicant for a grant under this act

1 who is delinquent in loan payments to the Pennsylvania Volunteer
2 Loan Assistance Program existing under the act of November 13, <—
3 1995 (P.L.604, No.61), known as the State Fire Commissioner Act,
4 LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER THE ACT OF JULY 15, <—
5 1976 (P.L.1036, NO.208), KNOWN AS THE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY,
6 AMBULANCE SERVICE AND RESCUE SQUAD ASSISTANCE ACT, shall agree
7 to use its grant funds to pay any arrears to the Commonwealth or
8 it will not be qualified to receive a grant. Any organization
9 agreeing to this arrangement who fails to make the payment to
10 the Commonwealth shall be disqualified from applying to the
11 grant program for a period of three years.

12 (c) Demonstration.--An applicant for a grant under this act
13 must demonstrate that it complied with all terms of its grant
14 agreement in the previous year regarding the use of the grant
15 money it received in previous years or it shall not be eligible
16 to receive a grant in the current year.

17 (d) Approval.--An applicant shall not be approved for a
18 grant to be used for purposes other than those stated in section
19 303(a) or 503(a).

20 SECTION 8.1. NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 1720- <—
21 C(C) OF THE ACT OF APRIL 9, 1929 (P.L.343, NO.176), KNOWN AS THE
22 FISCAL CODE, MONEYS APPROPRIATED TO THE VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY
23 GRANT PROGRAM BY SECTION 1720-C(C) OF THE FISCAL CODE SHALL BE
24 UTILIZED FOR PAYMENT OF GRANTS UNDER CHAPTERS 3 AND 5.

25 SECTION 8.2. FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2006,
26 GRANTS SHALL BE PAID BY DECEMBER 14, 2007. FOR THE FISCAL YEAR
27 COMMENCING JULY 1, 2007, PAYMENTS OF GRANTS SHALL COMMENCE ON OR
28 AFTER JANUARY 15, 2008.

29 Section 9. The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
30 shall conduct a performance review of the program authorized by

1 this act and shall submit its evaluation of and recommendations
2 regarding the program to the General Assembly no later than
3 February 28, 2012.

4 Section 10. Repeals are as follows:

5 (1) The General Assembly declares that the act repealed
6 under paragraph (2) is obsolete.

7 (2) The act of June 22, 2000 (P.L.477, No.66), known as
8 the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service
9 Grant Act, is repealed.

10 SECTION 11. THE ADDITION OF SECTION 901.1(A) OF THE ACT <—
11 SHALL APPLY TO GRANTS FOR THE FISCAL YEARS COMMENCING JULY 1,
12 2008, AND FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER.

13 Section ~~11~~ 12. This act shall take effect immediately. <—