

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 33 Session of 2011

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, KASUNIC, BROWNE, ORIE, ARGALL,  
RAFFERTY, KITCHEN, TOMLINSON, PIPPY, ALLOWAY, FARNESE,  
SOLOBAY, WAUGH, BREWSTER, COSTA AND BOSCOLA, JANUARY 12, 2011

REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JANUARY 12, 2011

AN ACT

1 Establishing a tuition credit program for certain members of  
2 volunteer fire companies, volunteer ambulance services and  
3 volunteer rescue squads and their dependent children and  
4 spouses.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Volunteer  
9 Emergency Service Tuition Credit Program Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

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

14 "Community college." A public college or technical institute  
15 which is established and operated under Article XIX-A of the act  
16 of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School  
17 Code of 1949, and all branches or campuses of a community  
18 college.

1 "Firefighter." A member of a volunteer fire company.

2 "State Fire Commissioner" or "commissioner." The  
3 Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner appointed under section 3  
4 of the act of November 13, 1995 (P.L.604, No.61), known as the  
5 State Fire Commissioner Act.

6 "Volunteer." A firefighter or member of a volunteer  
7 ambulance service or volunteer rescue squad.

8 "Volunteer ambulance service." Any nonprofit chartered  
9 corporation, association or organization located in this  
10 Commonwealth and regularly engaged in the service of providing  
11 emergency medical care and transportation of patients.

12 "Volunteer fire company." A nonprofit chartered corporation,  
13 association or organization located in this Commonwealth that  
14 provides fire protection services and may offer other voluntary  
15 emergency services within this Commonwealth. Voluntary emergency  
16 services may include voluntary ambulance and voluntary rescue  
17 services.

18 "Volunteer rescue squad." Any nonprofit chartered  
19 corporation, association or organization located in this  
20 Commonwealth which provides rescue services in this  
21 Commonwealth.

22 Section 3. Tuition credit program.

23 (a) General.--A person who is an active member of a  
24 volunteer fire company, volunteer ambulance service or volunteer  
25 rescue squad in good standing and the dependent children and  
26 spouse of such volunteer shall be eligible to enroll in  
27 postsecondary courses on a tuition-credit basis in a community  
28 college.

29 (b) Amount.--A volunteer and the volunteer's dependent  
30 children and spouse shall be eligible to receive tuition credit

1 in the aggregate amount of \$600 per year, not to exceed an  
2 aggregate maximum of \$2,400 over a four-year service period.

3 (c) Availability.--The tuition credit may be utilized for a  
4 course offered by the community college provided that available  
5 classroom space permits and that tuition-paying students  
6 constitute the minimum number required for the course.

7 (d) Fees.--Nothing in this act shall be construed to  
8 prohibit a community college from requiring registration and lab  
9 fees for individuals attending courses under this act.

#### 10 Section 4. Eligibility.

11 In order for a volunteer or a volunteer's dependent child or  
12 spouse to be eligible to receive tuition credit, the volunteer  
13 shall agree to serve as a member of a volunteer fire company,  
14 volunteer ambulance service or volunteer rescue squad for a  
15 minimum of four years and sign an agreement with the volunteer  
16 organization pledging four years of service in exchange for the  
17 tuition credit. Following each year of active volunteer  
18 services, the volunteer organization shall provide the State  
19 Fire Commissioner with a letter verifying that the volunteer has  
20 been a member in good standing for the past 12 months.

#### 21 Section 5. Verification of service.

22 Upon being accepted and enrolled in a community college, the  
23 volunteer, dependent child or spouse shall provide the community  
24 college with a sworn or official statement of fact by the  
25 commissioner attesting that the volunteer has performed the  
26 service required for the tuition credit. Upon completion of each  
27 semester, the volunteer shall submit a transcript to the  
28 commissioner to be maintained in a permanent record. The  
29 volunteer, dependent child or spouse shall maintain a "C" grade  
30 average in order to continue eligibility for the tuition credit

1 program.

2 Section 6. Issuance of certificate of authorization.

3 The commissioner shall issue a certificate of authorization  
4 to the volunteer, dependent child or spouse to be presented to  
5 the community college, stating that the volunteer, parent or  
6 spouse is a member in good standing of a volunteer fire company,  
7 volunteer ambulance service or volunteer rescue squad.

8 Section 7. State Fire Commissioner duties.

9 The Office of the State Fire Commissioner shall develop such  
10 procedures and forms as it deems necessary to carry out the  
11 provisions of this act.

12 Section 8. Effective date.

13 This act shall take effect in 30 days.