

**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
FISCAL NOTE**

BILL NO. Senate Bill 370

PRINTER NO. 1046

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

January 30, 2015

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator White

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 370 amends Chapter 78 of Title 35 (Health and Safety) relating to Grants to Fire Companies and Volunteer Services.

Senate Bill 370 extends the grant eligibility period from five years to ten years for volunteer fire companies and ambulance services after consolidation or merger.

Under current law, if two or more fire companies merge, the newly formed entity is authorized to continue to receive the combined total of each individual fire company's grant for up to five years after the consolidation. After the five-year period, the newly formed fire company would be eligible to receive only one grant. The loss of aggregate grant funds could serve as a disincentive for companies who are considering consolidation.

The act shall take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 370 will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

Under current law, \$22 million is made available to the Volunteer Fire Company Grant Program, and \$3 million is made available for the Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program. In addition, Act 78 of 2012 made an additional \$5 million available annually for grants to eligible fire companies. Senate Bill 370 has no effect on total grants of \$30 million per year.