

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 955

**PRINTER NO.** 1450

**AMOUNT**

\$450,000

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

November 13, 2017

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Vulakovich

**DESCRIPTION**

Senate Bill 955 amends Section 1550 (Firefighter and Emergency Service Training) of the Public School Code of 1949 to establish the Community College Secondary Education Fire Training Pilot Program to provide high school students with firefighter training through partnerships between community colleges and school districts or area vocational technical schools.

Requires the State Fire Commissioner to accept proposals submitted by community colleges and to select three community colleges from different regions to offer the pilot program. Requires the selected community colleges to enter into an agreement with a school district or area vocational technical school, or both, to provide firefighter training to students in at least the ninth grade that leads to Firefighter I certification.

Establishes a non-lapsing restricted account in the State Treasury, to be known as the Fire Training Fund, whereby the State Fire Commissioner may accept donations or other money for deposit into the fund on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Provides that each of the three pilot programs selected shall receive at least \$150,000 for the duration of the pilot program.

Requires the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a survey of volunteer fire companies in the municipalities surrounding the school districts and area vocational technical schools that participate in the pilot program to determine whether the pilot program increased the number of volunteer firefighters and to make additional recommendations. Requires the survey results to be submitted to the chair and minority chair of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives within six months of the expiration of the pilot program.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2018, or immediately, whichever is later and provides for the pilot program to expire four years from the effective date of the legislation.

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### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The enactment of Senate Bill 955 will cost the Commonwealth \$450,000 as the legislation requires each of the three community colleges offering the pilot program to receive at least \$150,000 for the duration of the pilot program.

The provisions contained in the legislation requiring the LBFC to survey municipalities surrounding schools that participate in the pilot program will add to the agency's administrative responsibilities. Based on information provided by the LBFC, the average cost of a project which the agency is statutorily directed to perform is estimated to be \$137,000. However, LBFC believes that the survey contained in Senate Bill 955 can be accomplished within its existing operating budget because surveys require minimal staff time when compared to more extensive reports and the deadline for the survey to be completed is far enough in advance that it can be accommodated in its annual spending plan.