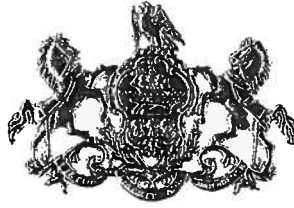


State Senator
Don White
41st Senatorial District



Senate of Pennsylvania

December 22, 2010

DEC 22 2010

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To: All Senate Members

From: Senator Don White *DCW*

Re: Cosponsorship Memo--Volunteer Emergency Service Partnership Grant Program

I will re-introduce Senate Bill 303 from last session to establish a grant program to encourage volunteer fire company partnerships. Numerous studies have concluded that the Commonwealth's delivery of volunteer fire services is very fragmented and inefficient. Many departments have identified difficulties in recruiting new members and raising the finances necessary to continue operation. The state Fire Commissioner and DCED have long been advocates for regionalization and consolidation efforts to occur among departments in order to improve efficiency. However there is little incentive for local communities and their volunteer fire companies to consider such initiatives.

This program would be funded by the \$100 million bond issue, which was approved by voters in 2002 to encourage volunteer departments to work together in a cooperative way. The proposed legislation will outline a new program with funding made available by direct application from emergency service organizations, provided certain criteria are met. Grants will be available to private, non-profit volunteer fire companies/departments or EMS organizations and local governments applying on behalf of the aforementioned.

The grants could be used for emergency response vehicles, building expansion or renovation, reduction or elimination of debt, legal and administrative costs of forming partnerships (not including mutual aid agreements), costs for development of long-range capital budget or expenditure plans, costs to maintain recruitment or retention plans, costs to establish live-in quarters.

The previous versions of this bill were passed unanimously by the Senate in two different sessions. Cosponsors for the 2009-10 Session were: D. WHITE, WONDERLING, FERLO, O'PAKE, RAFFERTY, STOUT, KASUNIC, ALLOWAY, ERICKSON, MUSTO, BROWNE, KITCHEN, TOMLINSON, ORIE, SMUCKER, WOZNIAK, GORDNER, LOGAN, PIPPY, M. WHITE, LEACH, BOSCOLA and WASHINGTON.

Should you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please email Anne Achenbach at aachenbach@pasen.gov or call 787-8724.

DCW/ama