
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1103 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY RUFFING, STURLA, SOLOBAY, ROONEY, CAPPABIANCA,
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YOUNGBLOOD, JOSEPHS, COSTA, WATERS, FRANKEL, SAINATO AND
HARHAI, MARCH 21, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, MARCH 21, 2001

AN ACT

1 Establishing a grant program for paid municipal fire
2 departments; and making an appropriation.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Municipal
7 Fire Department Grant Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

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

12 "Advanced life support services." The term shall have the
13 meaning given to it in the act of July 3, 1985 (P.L.164, No.45),
14 known as the Emergency Medical Services Act.

1 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency.

2 "Basic life support services." The term shall have the
3 meaning given to it in the act of July 3, 1985 (P.L.164, No.45),
4 known as the Emergency Medical Services Act.

5 "Commissioner." The State Fire Commissioner.

6 "Facility." A structure or portion thereof intended for the
7 purpose of storage or protection of firefighting apparatus,
8 ambulances and rescue vehicles and related equipment and gear.
9 The term does not include meeting halls, social halls, social
10 rooms, lounges or any other facility not directly related to
11 firefighting or the furnishing of ambulance or rescue services.

12 "Fiscal year." The fiscal year of the Commonwealth of
13 Pennsylvania.

14 "Grant program." The Municipal Fire Department Grant Program
15 established in section 3.

16 "Municipality." Any city, borough, incorporated town,
17 township or home rule municipality.

18 "Pension plan or system." As defined by section 102 of the
19 act of December 18, 1984 (P.L.1005, No.205), known as the
20 Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act.

21 "Plan year." The 12-consecutive-month period applicable to a
22 pension plan which is utilized for various actuarial and
23 financial purposes and which shall be considered a calendar year
24 commencing on January 1 and ending on December 31.

25 "Unfunded actuarial accrued liability." As defined by
26 section 102 of the act of act of December 18, 1984 (P.L.1005,
27 No.205), known as the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard
28 and Recovery Act.

29 Section 3. Municipal Fire Department Grant Program.

30 (a) Establishment.--The Municipal Fire Department Grant

1 Program is hereby established and shall be administered by the
2 agency in consultation with the commissioner. Grants provided
3 under this program shall be used to improve and enhance the
4 capabilities of the paid municipal fire department to provide
5 firefighting, ambulance and rescue services.

6 (b) Guidelines and procedures.--The agency shall develop
7 guidelines, procedures and all applications necessary to
8 implement the grant program. The agency shall submit the
9 guidelines, procedures and applications to the Legislative
10 Reference Bureau for publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin
11 and Pennsylvania Code within 90 days of the effective date of
12 this act.

13 Section 4. Award of grants.

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

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

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

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

25 (4) Contributions to a pension plan or system designated
26 for paid firefighters that has an unfunded actuarial accrued
27 liability as of the most recent plan year.

28 (b) Limits.--

29 (1) Grants awarded pursuant to this act shall be made on
30 a competitive basis following the submission of an

1 application and an appropriate review procedure undertaken by
2 the agency in consultation with the commissioner, and not be
3 less than \$50,000 nor more than \$2,000,000 per municipal fire
4 department.

5 (2) No municipal fire department shall receive more than
6 one grant per fiscal year under sections 4 and 5.

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

8 (1) The agency shall provide applications for grants
9 under this act to every paid fire department serving a
10 municipality in this Commonwealth on or before August 1 of
11 that year.

12 (2) Municipal fire departments seeking grants under this
13 act shall submit completed applications to the agency on or
14 before November 1 of that year. The agency shall act to
15 approve or disapprove the application by December 31 of that
16 year. Applications which have not been approved or
17 disapproved by the agency by December 31 shall be deemed
18 approved.

19 (3) Applications submitted after the November 1 deadline
20 shall be accepted by the agency, and grants may be awarded at
21 the discretion of the agency from the reserve fund set aside
22 under section 5.

23 (d) Eligibility.--Grant funds awarded under this act shall
24 be limited to paid fire departments serving a municipality or
25 municipalities within this Commonwealth.

26 Section 5. Reserve funds.

27 (a) Percentage.--The agency shall reserve an amount not to
28 exceed 3% of the funds allocated in section 6 for the grant
29 program established under this act for the purposes of awarding
30 grants to municipal fire departments that submit applications

1 after the November 1 deadline, that would have otherwise been
2 eligible for and been awarded a grant under the grant program.

3 (b) Limitations.--No municipal fire department may receive a
4 grant from reserve funds in an amount greater than the amount
5 that it would have received had it applied in a timely manner.

6 Section 6. Municipal Fire Department Grant Program funding.

7 (a) Initial appropriation.--The sum of \$25,000,000, or as
8 much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the
9 Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency for the purpose of
10 making grants to eligible municipal fire departments pursuant to
11 this act.

12 (b) Continuing appropriation.--The General Assembly shall
13 annually include in the appropriation to the Pennsylvania
14 Emergency Management Agency in the General Appropriation Act an
15 appropriation from the General Fund in an amount sufficient to
16 make grant awards pursuant to this act.

17 (c) Restriction.--No moneys from the appropriation for
18 grants to municipal fire departments authorized pursuant to this
19 act shall be used for expenses or costs incurred by the agency
20 for the administration of the grant program authorized by this
21 act.

22 Section 20. Effective date.

23 This act shall take effect July 1, 2001, or immediately,
24 whichever is later.