

FIREFIGHTER TRAINING GRANT FUNDING

Phone: (517) 373-8080
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Senate Bill 833 as passed the Senate
Sponsors: Senator Goeff Hansen
Committee: Appropriations

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

Complete to: 11/28/16

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 833 passed the Senate on May 31, 2016. The bill amends the Firefighters Training Council Act (Public Act 291 of 1966) in the following ways:

- Specifies that “firefighter training” refers to a program eligible to receive training grants from the Fireworks Safety Fund.
- Alters the definition of “firefighter training” to include the following activities (activities that training grants may be expended for): emergency medical service, hazardous material response, technical rescue, airport rescue and firefighting, fire inspection, fire investigation, and fire safety education.
- Stipulates that firefighter training includes, but is not limited to, training required for Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II under the “Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications” National Fire Protection Association Standard No. 1001.
- Eliminates the Firefighters Training Fund as the source for grant funding to accomplish the goals of the Firefighter Training Council Act.
- Stipulates that firefighter training shall be funded from the Fireworks Safety Fund created by Section 11 of PA 256 of 2011 (the Fireworks Safety Fund consists of funds collected from Fireworks Safety Fees created by Section 8 of PA 256 of 2011).
- Allows the State Fire Marshall to deny requests for grant funding not meeting the requirements of the Firefighters Training Council Act.
- Undesignated grant monies will be redistributed using an application process, rather than the statutory redistribution formula currently in use. Undesignated money not redistributed through the application process will be deposited into the Fireworks Safety Fund. Money in this fund will not lapse to the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year.
- Annual expenditures from the Fireworks Safety Fund are not to exceed 75% of the revenue generated through the collection of Fireworks Safety Fees, unless the expenditure is approved by the Firefighters Training Council and the State Fire Marshall.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would likely have a nominal fiscal impact on the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs and an indeterminate fiscal impact on local units of government. The creation of an application process for the redistribution of grant funding will create a fiscal impact for local governments. Counties currently receive redistributed grant funds based on a formula, which bases redistribution 70% on the population of the county and 30% on the square mileage of the county. Under the bill, counties will have to apply for a portion of the redistribution. This change would likely increase administrative costs associated with the application process for both local governments and for the Firefighter Training Council.

Changing the funding source for firefighter training grants from the Firefighters Training Fund to the Fireworks Safety Fund should not create any fiscal changes, but the Department cannot be certain. There is some concern that removing the reference to an appropriation in Section 14 of the bill, and instead referencing deposited monies, could have unintended long-term consequences. This bill designates Fireworks Safety Fees to finance firefighter training, codifying current departmental practice.

Fiscal Analyst: Marcus Coffin

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