

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005

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HOUSE DRH10218-LB-180 (4/5)

Short Title: Fire Department Grants.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Moore.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS TO
RURAL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS TO REFLECT POPULATION
GROWTH IN RAPIDLY URBANIZED AREAS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 58-87-1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 58-87-1. Volunteer Fire Department Fund.

(a) There is created the Volunteer Fire Department Fund to provide matching grants to volunteer fire departments to purchase equipment and make capital improvements. The Fund shall be set up in the Department of Insurance. The State Treasurer shall invest its assets according to law, and the earnings shall remain in the Fund. The Fund shall be distributed under the direction of the Commissioner of Insurance. Beginning January 1, 1988, an eligible fire department may apply to the Commissioner of Insurance for a grant under this section. Beginning May 1, 1988, and on each May 15, thereafter, the Commissioner shall make grants to eligible fire departments subject to the following limitations:

- (1) The size of a grant may not exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000);
- (2) The applicant shall match the grant on a dollar-for-dollar basis;
- (3) The grant may be used only for equipment purchases, payment of highway use taxes on those purchases, or capital expenditures necessary to provide fire protection services; and
- (4) An applicant may receive no more than one grant per fiscal year.

In awarding grants under this section, the Commissioner shall to the extent possible select applicants from all parts of the State based upon need. Up to two percent (2%) of the Fund may be used for additional staff and resources to administer the Fund in each fiscal year.

1 No fire department may be declared ineligible for a grant under this section solely
2 because it is classified as a municipal fire department.

3 (b) A fire department is eligible for a grant under this section if it meets all of the
4 following conditions:

5 (1) It serves a response area of ~~6,000~~9,000 or less in population.

6 (2) It consists entirely of volunteer members, with the exception that the
7 unit may have paid members to fill the equivalent of three full-time
8 paid positions.

9 (3) It has been certified by the Department of Insurance.

10 In making the population determination under subdivision (1) of this subsection, the
11 Department shall use the most recent annual population estimates certified by the State
12 Budget Officer.

13 (c) The Commissioner of Insurance shall submit a written report to the General
14 Assembly within 60 days after the grants have been made. This report shall contain the
15 amount of the grant and the name of the recipient."

16 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.