

FIREFIGHTER TRAINING FOR 16-YEAR OLDS

Mitchell Bean, Director
Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 212 as passed by the Senate

Sponsor: Sen. Roger Kahn, M.D.

House Committee: Local, Intergovernmental, and Regional Affairs

Senate Committee: Local Government and Elections

Complete to 5-25-11

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 212 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 5-4-11

The bill would create a new act to do the following:

****Permit a fire department to establish a Boy Scout Explorer post for the purpose of firefighter training.**

****Permit a school district or other entity to affiliate with a fire department to allow individuals who are 16 years of age or older to participate in firefighter training courses and the firefighter exam.**

****Allow a school board to apply for authorization to hire a non-certificated person to teach firefighter I and II courses.**

More specifically, under the bill an organized fire department that administered the firefighter I and II courses, as well as the firefighter examination, could establish a Boy Scouts of America Explorer Post within the department for young people 16 years of age or older.

Then, an "affiliated organization" could partner with the fire department to allow individuals 16 years of age or older to participate in the firefighter I or II courses, and to take the firefighter examination. (The bill would define "affiliated organization" to mean a school district, organized fire department, or other entity.)

Further, the bill specifies that the governing board of a local or intermediate school district could apply to the State Board of Education under Section 1233b of the Revised School Code (described below), to receive a permit or annual authorization, in order to engage a full- or part-time non-certificated, non-endorsed teacher to teach firefighter I or II courses. An individual engaged as a teacher would have to be certified as provided in the Firefighters Training Council Act, and the examination for a course taught by a teacher engaged under the bill would have to be administered as provided in that act.

Finally, the bill would not require the State Fire Marshal or the Office of Fire Fighter Training to pay or contribute any funds--other than those already imposed under the Firefighters Training Council Act--for the administration of the courses or the

examinations. Instead, any additional costs would be borne by the fire department, or the individuals taking the courses and exam.

(Note: Section 1233b of the Revised School Code allows a school board to engage a non-certificated, non-endorsed teacher to teach a course in a specified subject, including math, chemistry, and robotics, or in another subject area determined by the State Board to be appropriate, in grades 9 through 12. As a rule, this applies only if the district cannot engage a certificated, endorsed teacher. A non-certificated, non-endorsed teacher must have a bachelor's degree and have a major or graduate degree in the field of specialization he or she will teach; if the teacher wishes to teach more than one year, he or she must have passed a basic skills exam and, if one exists, a subject area exam in the field of specialization he or she will teach.)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Office of Fire Fighter Training is located in the Bureau of Fire Services, within what is now the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. The Office describes firefighter I and II training as follows: *"The Fire Fighter I & II course is structured for competency-based group instruction of the Fire Fighter I and Fire Fighter II information presented in the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA), Essentials of Fire Fighting, Fourth Edition. It addresses the objectives covered in the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1001...and objectives related to Competencies for the First Responder at the Awareness Level Chapter 2, and Operational Level Chapter 3, of NFPA 472..."*

The course requires 227 hours of instruction. For certification, students must attain a minimum grade of 70 percent on a written final exam and successfully complete a practical skills exam. As a rule, a person taking the course must be at least 18-years-old, and be either a member of an organized Michigan fire department or a pre-service student registered through a recognized college- or university-based regional training center. Exceptions apply to individuals sponsored by a fire department cadet program or fire department Boy Scouts of America Explorer program; cadets and Explorer students must be 16 or 17 years old. (Information derived from Senate Fiscal Agency analysis dated 4-15-11.)

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would appear to have no effect on state revenues or expenditures. The bill's impact on local units would depend on how expanding training classes are funded. The bill says costs are to be borne by the fire department or by the individuals taking the courses and exam. The bill is permissive, and it is not known how many fire departments and affiliated organizations would participate.

Legislative Analyst: J. Hunault

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.