



Washington State Patrol 2024 Proposed Agency Request Legislation Z-0368.1 Fire Service Training Account

PURPOSE

The Washington State Fire Training Division (FTD) requests a ten percent increase in the distribution of State Fire Insurance Premium Tax revenue to the Fire Service Training Account from twenty percent to thirty percent. The Fire Training Academy (FTA) funding source has experienced a steep decline in health over the past four biennia, impacting the training and maintenance of the academy. Training courses vital to volunteer and career firefighters could be canceled when the funding source is affected to this degree. Additionally, funding availability for other training entities, such as the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC), is also reduced, preventing the expansion of this vital training organization dedicated to career firefighter development.

OUTCOMES

The FTA will have the funding to complete the projects outlined in the current Fire Training Academy Master Plan within the twenty-year window. This Master Plan, once fully implemented, will result in a facility that is a statewide resource for emergency responders. Increased funding will allow the FTA to utilize the Fire Service Training Account to continue capital improvement projects without impacting the overall health of the account.

The JATC will be able to expand its apprenticeship training program and meet goals identified in its charter, and support continued growth. As per recent L&I assessments, current JATC funding needs to be improved to support the resources required to effectively and efficiently deliver the program compared to other apprenticeship programs.

We will be able to expand training across the state, reaching out to underserved communities and providing training tailored of the needs to the Fire Districts through regional direct delivery.

We will expand Community Risk Reduction (CRR) programs and assist communities in incorporating CRR into community response and prevention. These programs will increase awareness, response, and preventative measures through an integrated approach that includes CRR in all policies and procedures utilized by cities and counties that adopt these best management practices.

We will expand the delivery of National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) training to the fire service to ensure quality incident data collection, preparing emergency response organizations to address prevention and mitigation efforts. Improved data collection will allow agencies to target risks in their area of responsibility better.

IMPACTS

Without this increase in revenue distributions to the Fire Service Training Account, the funding to support the Washington State Fire Service will continue to fall short of the needs, resulting in both short-term and long-term impacts, including a reduction in basic fire service training offered and potential elimination of advanced and specialty training. This training is vital to responder safety and the protection of community members. The current funding model is also unable to sustain the continued expansion, maintenance, and operation of the FTA, RDD, and JATC. Without these programs, volunteer and career firefighters will experience a reduction in training opportunities and career development across the state, ultimately impacting the safety of our citizens.

BILL REQUEST - CODE REVISER'S OFFICE

BILL REQ. #: Z-0368.1/23

ATTY/TYPIST: RR:lcl

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Concerning the fire service training account.

AN ACT Relating to the fire service training account; and amending RCW 43.43.944.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

Sec. 1. RCW 43.43.944 and 2020 c 88 s 6 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The fire service training account is hereby established in the state treasury. The primary purpose of the account is firefighter training for both volunteer and career firefighters. The fund shall consist of:

(a) All fees received by the Washington state patrol for fire service training;

(b) All grants and bequests accepted by the Washington state patrol under RCW 43.43.940;

(c) (~~Twenty~~) Thirty percent of all moneys received by the state on fire insurance premiums;

(d) Revenue from penalties established under RCW 19.27.740; and

(e) General fund—state moneys appropriated into the account by the legislature.

(2) Moneys in the account may be appropriated for: (a) Fire service training; (b) school fire prevention activities within the Washington state patrol; and (c) the maintenance, operations, and capital projects of the state fire training academy. However, expenditures for purposes of (b) and (c) of this subsection may only be made to the extent that these expenditures do not adversely affect expenditures for the purpose of (a) of this subsection. The state patrol may use amounts appropriated from the fire service training account under this section to contract with the Washington state firefighters apprenticeship trust for the operation of the firefighter joint apprenticeship training program. The contract may call for payments on a monthly basis.

(3) Any general fund—state moneys appropriated into the account shall be allocated solely to the firefighter joint apprenticeship training program. The Washington state patrol may contract with outside entities for the administration and delivery of the firefighter joint apprenticeship training program.

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