

# Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-5666

AN ACT CONCERNING GRANTS TO DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES FOR

**Title:** THE TRAINING OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS.

**Vote Date:** 3/18/2021

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 2/18/2021

**File No.:**

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### **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

REP. ROCHELLE, 104th Dist.

### **REASONS FOR BILL:**

To provide grants to distressed communities for the training of volunteer firefighters.

### **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None expressed.

### **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

#### **Sen. Formica, 20<sup>th</sup> Dist.:**

Submitted written testimony in support with substitute language. Sen. Formica recommends amending the bill to allow the use of personal savings for higher education to be used for trade, police, or fire schools.

#### **Tedd Schroll, Legislative Representative, Connecticut State Firefighters Association, Inc. (CSFA):**

Submitted written testimony in support. Mr. Schroll says tuition cost is often a limiting factor for recruitment and explains what the bill will do for distressed municipalities.

#### **Alan Shaw, Volunteer Firefighter:**

Submitted written testimony in support. Mr. Shaw says while neither he nor his community will benefit from this bill directly, he believes it is good for the state in general. He says, "Increasing access to the academic side of volunteer firefighting for those that give freely of their time and labor to serve some of our most vulnerable communities can only be a good

thing." Mr. Shaw adds, " That this bill would also address the key role our regional fire schools play in keeping our state's volunteer firefighters trained and certified is paramount."

**Timothy P. Willis, Volunteer Firefighter:**

Submitted written testimony in support. As a Fire Service Instructor, Mr. Willis sees communities struggling to recruit and train volunteer firefighters and explains "the Firefighter I program is the initial step in preparing these volunteers to face the very real and dangerous rigors that they may be called upon to at any time." While neither he nor his community will benefit from this bill directly, says Mr. Willis, he believes it is good for the state in general

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None expressed.

**Reported by: Jeremy Salyer**

**Date: 03/26/2021**