

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2493

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**As Passed House:**

February 12, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to volunteer fire fighters.

**Brief Description:** Removing the limitation on the number of volunteer fire fighters.

**Sponsors:** By Representatives Jackley, Mulliken, Dunshee, Ogden, Dunn, Wood and Casada.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government & Housing: 1/30/02 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 2/12/02, 97-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Removes the volunteer fire fighter membership limit on local governments, for the purposes of membership in the volunteer fire fighters relief and pension fund.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT & HOUSING

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Edwards, Vice Chair; Mulliken, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Crouse, DeBolt, Dunn, Hatfield, Kirby, Mielke and Sullivan.

**Staff:** Scott MacColl (786-7106).

**Background:**

Municipalities must, through legislative action, enroll their volunteer fire fighters in the Volunteer Firefighters Relief and Pension Fund (Fund), and must pay the fees prescribed in statute for their enrollment. The Fund provides protection for all its fire fighters and their families from death, sickness, injury, or disability arising in the performance of their duties as fire fighters.

Municipalities also must, through legislative action, limit the number of volunteer fire fighters to 25 per thousand population. The limit may be increased only by the number of fire fighters with emergency medical training for those departments that operate ambulance service.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The 25 per thousand population limit on the number of volunteer fire fighters that must be covered by local governments in the Volunteer Firefighters Relief and Pension Fund is removed.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** This bill was brought at the request of the volunteer fire fighters board, and an amendment is requested to state that if someone drops out, the municipality receives their money back. Currently, the total cost per year is split between the city and the volunteer. After 10 years, if a volunteer leaves service they can receive their money back from the fund, yet the money cities contribute is in limbo. By allowing cities to get their money back, it might encourage them to pay the full \$60 fee for volunteers.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** (In support) Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association; and Brigitte K. Smith, Board for Volunteer Fire Fighters.