

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6119

As Amended by House, April 6, 2007

Title: An act relating to changing the distribution to and allocation of the fire service training account.

Brief Description: Changing the distribution to and allocation of the fire service training account.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Keiser, Marr, Jacobsen, Franklin, Benton and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 2/28/07, 3/05/07 [DP].

Passed Senate: 3/13/07, 47-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Regala, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Staff: Richard Ramsey (786-7412)

Background: The Fire Service Training Account (Account) was established in 1986 to fund fire training activities. Distributions from the Account reimburse fire districts and city fire departments for training activities and fund training activities at the Fire Training Academy (Academy).

The Account receives revenue from two sources: (1) training fees paid to the Washington State Patrol by local fire services and other entities for training at the Academy; and (2) a portion of the premium taxes paid on fire insurance premiums. The premium taxes are distributed as follows:

- 40 percent – volunteer fire fighters' relief and pension fund;
- 25 percent – cities with full-time fire departments;
- 20 percent – Fire Service Training Account; and
- 15 percent – state General Fund.

Revenue distributions to the account from the insurance premium tax were \$2.4 million in FY 2005 and \$2.6 million in FY 2006.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: The portion of the state fire insurance premium tax deposited in the Account is increased from 20 percent to 35 percent and the 15 percent distribution to the state General Fund is eliminated.

Of the fire insurance premiums in the Account, 28.5 percent is allocated for a firefighter joint apprenticeship training program. Allocations to the apprenticeship program are estimated at \$1.3 million per year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: According to the fiscal note in 2007-09, the state General Fund would receive \$3,890,000 less and the Fire Service Training Account would receive an additional \$2.7 million.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Kelly Fox, Washington State Council of Fire Fighters.

House Amendment(s): The House amendments make the following changes: eliminates the diversion of 15 percent of the revenue from the fire insurance premium tax from the General Fund to the Fire Service Training Account (Account); authorizes the Washington State Patrol to contract with the Washington State Firefighters Apprenticeship Trust to operate the firefighter joint apprenticeship training program using the state General Fund as appropriated by the Legislature; requires that any General Fund appropriations to the Account be allocated for the firefighter joint apprenticeship training program; and adds a null and void provision.