

No. 2006-13

AN ACT

HB 599

Amending the act of July 31, 2003 (P.L.73, No.17), entitled "An act establishing a grant program for volunteer fire companies and volunteer ambulance services; and providing for grant funding," further providing for award of grants and for expiration of authority; and making an appropriation.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Sections 303, 503 and 901 of the act of July 31, 2003 (P.L.73, No.17), known as the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Act, amended July 15, 2004 (P.L.712, No.80), are amended to read:

Section 303. Award of grants.

(a) Authorization.—The agency is hereby authorized to make a grant award to each eligible volunteer fire company for the following:

(1) Construction and/or renovation of the fire company's facility and purchase or repair of fixtures and furnishings necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the company to provide fire, ambulance and rescue services.

(2) Repair of firefighting, ambulance or rescue equipment or purchase thereof.

(3) Debt reduction associated with paragraph (1) or (2).

(4) Training and certification of members.

(b) Limits.—

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (3), grants shall be not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$15,000 per volunteer fire company.

(2) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the total dollar amount of approved applications exceeds the amount of funds appropriated by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(3) In a municipality where there are two or more volunteer fire companies and if two or more fire companies consolidated their use of equipment, firefighters and services **[between July 1, 1998, and the date of enactment of this act,] after July 1, 1998**, each entity from which the consolidated entity was created will be eligible for a grant as though it had not consolidated.

(c) Time for filing application and department action.—

(1) The agency shall provide **[applications] written instructions and guidelines** for grants under this act to the fire chief and president of every volunteer fire company in this Commonwealth on or before **[July 31, 2004] February 28, 2006**.

(2) Volunteer fire companies seeking grants under this act shall submit completed applications to the agency on or before **[December 31, 2004] April 30, 2006**. The agency shall act to approve or disapprove the application by **[May 1, 2005] June 30, 2006**. Applications which have not been approved or disapproved by the agency by **[May 1, 2005] June 30, 2006**, shall be deemed approved.

(d) Eligibility.—To receive grant funds under this act, a volunteer fire company shall have actively responded to one or more fire or rescue emergencies since July 1, **[2003] 2005**, and must sign an agreement to actively participate in the Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting System which is administered by the agency.

Section 503. Award of grants.

(a) Authorization.—The agency is hereby authorized to make a grant award to each eligible volunteer ambulance service for the following:

(1) Construction and/or renovation of the volunteer ambulance service's facility and purchase or repair of fixtures, furnishings, office equipment and support services necessary to maintain or improve the capability of the ambulance service to provide ambulance, emergency medical, basic life support and advanced life support services.

(2) Repair of ambulance equipment or purchase thereof.

(3) Debt reduction associated with paragraph (1) or (2).

(4) Training and certification of members.

(b) Limits.—

(1) Grants shall be not less than \$2,500 and not more than \$10,000 per volunteer ambulance service.

(2) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the total dollar amount of approved applications exceeds the amount of funds appropriated by the General Assembly for this purpose.

(3) If two or more volunteer ambulance services consolidated their use of equipment, personnel and services after July 1, 1998, each entity from which the consolidated entity was created will be eligible for a grant as though it had not consolidated.

(c) Time for filing application and department action.—

(1) The agency shall provide **[applications] written instructions and guidelines** for grants under this act to the president of every volunteer ambulance service in this Commonwealth on or before **[July 31, 2004] February 28, 2006**.

(2) Volunteer ambulance services seeking grants under this chapter shall submit completed applications to the agency on or before **[December 31, 2004] April 30, 2006**. The agency shall act to approve or disapprove the application by **[May 1, 2005] June 30, 2006**. Applications which have not been approved or disapproved by the agency by **[May 1, 2005] June 30, 2006**, shall be deemed approved.

Section 901. Expiration of authority.

The authority of the agency to award grants under Chapters 3 and 5 shall expire June 30, [2005] 2007.

Section 2. The sum of \$25,000,000 is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency for the award of grants under sections 303 and 503 of the act.

Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 21st day of February, A.D. 2006.

EDWARD G. RENDELL