

STATE OF NEW YORK

9779--A

IN ASSEMBLY

February 11, 2020

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE, ENGLEBRIGHT, NORRIS, DeSTEFANO, HAWLEY, GALEF, MORINELLO, McMAHON, HUNTER, STERN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT directing the office of fire prevention and control within the division of homeland security and emergency services to form a task force and issue a report relating to volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. New York state volunteer firefighter recruitment and
2 retention task force. There is hereby created the volunteer firefighter
3 recruitment and retention task force whose membership shall consist of
4 the chair to be appointed by the governor; the state fire administrator
5 or his or her designee; the commissioner of education or his or her
6 designee; the chancellor of the state university of New York or his or
7 her designee; the commissioner of taxation and finance or his or her
8 designee; the commissioner of labor or his or her designee; the presi-
9 dent of the Fireman's Association of the State of New York or his or her
10 designee; the president of the Association of Fire Districts or his or
11 her designee; the president of the New York State Association of Fire
12 Chiefs or his or her designee; the president of the New York State Fire
13 Coordinators or his or her designee; two members appointed by the tempo-
14 rary president of the senate; two members appointed by the speaker of
15 the assembly; one member appointed by the minority leader of the senate;
16 and one member appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. The
17 task force shall report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly and
18 the temporary president of the senate no later than one year after the
19 effective date of this act. Such report shall include, but not be
20 limited to, recommendations concerning:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD15049-06-0

1 1. Firefighter 1 training, and all other firefighter training offered
2 by the office of fire prevention and control, and delivery methods to
3 enhance and streamline training including the use of distance learning;

4 2. The utilization of community colleges, BOCES or state accredited
5 high schools to train firefighters and the creation of pilot programs
6 within community colleges or BOCES that will offer Firefighter 1 certifi-
7 cation upon completion;

8 3. The creation of a dedicated bureau within the office of fire
9 prevention and control responsible for recruitment and retention of
10 volunteer firefighters;

11 4. Tax incentives and volunteer firefighter benefits currently
12 provided and recommendations as to these or new programs;

13 5. Analysis of current recruitment and retention programs successfully
14 being utilized by other states and recommendations as to adoption of
15 similar programs in New York; and

16 6. Identification and recruitment incentives to assist in the recruit-
17 ment of volunteer firefighters from under-represented and at-risk popu-
18 lations.

19 All appointees of the task force shall be made no later than thirty
20 days after the effective date of this act. Any vacancy shall be filled
21 by the appointing authority. The task force shall meet as frequently as
22 deemed necessary prior to issuing its recommendations. The members of
23 the task force shall serve without compensation, except that members
24 shall be allowed their necessary and actual expenses incurred in the
25 performance of their duties under this section. The office of fire
26 prevention and control within the department of homeland security and
27 emergency services shall provide the task force with such facilities,
28 assistance, and data as will enable such task force to carry out its
29 powers and duties within reason.

30 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be
31 deemed repealed December 31, 2021.