

STATE OF NEW YORK

7589--A

IN SENATE

January 29, 2020

Introduced by Sens. GAUGHRAN, ADDABBO, KAPLAN, SKOUFIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to 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:

Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 159-d-1 to read as follows:

§ 159-d-1. New York state volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention task force. There is hereby created the volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention task force whose membership shall consist of the chair to be appointed by the governor, or his or her designee; the state fire administrator; the commissioner of homeland security and emergency services or his or her designee; the commissioner of education or his or her designee; the chancellor of the state university of New York or his or her designee; the commissioner of taxation and finance or his or her designee; the commissioner of labor or his or her designee; the president of the Fireman's Association of the State of New York or his or her designee; the president of the Association of Fire Districts or his or her designee; the president of the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs or his or her designee; the president of the New York State Fire Coordinators or his or her designee; two members appointed by the temporary president of the senate or his or her designee; two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly or his or her designee; one member appointed by the minority leader of the senate; and one member appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. The governor shall appoint the chair of the task force. The task force shall report to the governor, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate no later than one year after the effective date of this

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

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1 section. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, recommenda-
2 tions concerning:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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