

# STATE OF NEW YORK

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8307

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

June 13, 2019

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Introduced by M. of A. NORRIS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Local Governments

AN ACT to create the "commission on volunteer fire departments" to evaluate the need for resources for volunteer fire departments

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

1 Section 1. (a) There is hereby created a commission to be known as the  
2 "commission on volunteer fire departments", hereafter referred to as the  
3 "commission", which shall be tasked with evaluating the need for  
4 resources for volunteer fire departments within the state.

5 (b) The commission shall consist of eleven members: six members  
6 appointed by the governor, one of which shall include the commissioner  
7 of the division of homeland security and emergency services who shall  
8 serve as the chairperson, the director of the office of fire prevention  
9 and control, one member appointed by the temporary president of the  
10 senate, one member appointed by the speaker of the assembly, one member  
11 appointed by the minority leader of the senate and one member appointed  
12 by the minority leader of the assembly. All appointments to the commis-  
13 sion shall be made within ninety days of the effective date of this act.

14 (c) The commission shall have the authority to direct the division of  
15 homeland security and emergency services to conduct any study related to  
16 researching or evaluating the status of volunteer fire departments with-  
17 in the state.

18 (d) The commission shall consult with, or attempt to consult with,  
19 representatives from the following organizations regarding the research  
20 or study of the status of volunteer fire departments within the state: a  
21 designee from the Firemen's Association of the State of New York, a  
22 designee from the New York State Association of Counties, a designee  
23 from the New York Commission of Mayors, a designee from the New York  
24 State Association of Fire Chiefs, a designee from the Association of  
25 Fire Districts of New York, a designee from the Volunteer Fire Police

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

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1 Association of the State of New York, the County Fire Coordinators Asso-  
2 ciation of the State of New York and the New York State Fire Marshal and  
3 Inspectors Association.

4 (e) The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for  
5 their services, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses  
6 incurred in the performance of their duties pursuant to this act.

7 (f) The commission shall submit a written report to the governor,  
8 temporary president of the senate, minority leader of the senate, speak-  
9 er of the assembly and minority leader of the assembly detailing their  
10 findings. This report shall be made publicly available on the division  
11 of homeland security and emergency services' website within thirty days  
12 of being published.

13 § 2. (a) The study shall evaluate staffing requirements for all volun-  
14 teer fire departments and volunteer emergency medical and volunteer fire  
15 police services within the state and subsequently develop a comprehen-  
16 sive recruitment and retention program. The commission shall also deter-  
17 mine, in conjunction with all volunteer fire departments within the  
18 state, minimum needs of fire department apparatus, turnout gear, rescue  
19 gear or EMS lifesaving equipment and currently used equipment that does  
20 not meet the most current safety standards.

21 (b) The commission shall include in their report an estimated cost of  
22 replacing or renovating fire department apparatus, vehicles, personal  
23 protective equipment, fire department structures, recruitment and  
24 retention programs or any other necessary expenses outlined in such  
25 report, and assessed at the county level.

26 (c) The commission shall hold at least three public hearings within  
27 the state, one in each of the following appellate districts: second  
28 appellate district; third appellate district; and fourth appellate  
29 district.

30 (d) The commission shall conduct and complete the study no later than  
31 the first of December next succeeding the third calendar year after the  
32 effective date of this act.

33 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.