STATE OF NEW YORK

8658

IN SENATE

March 28, 2022

Introduced by Sen. GAUGHRAN -- (at request of the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services) -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT to amend chapter 258 of the laws of 2020 relating 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, in relation to the submission date of such report and to the effectiveness thereof

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

Section 1. Sections 1 and 2 of chapter 258 of the laws of 2020, relating 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, as amended by chapter 7 of the laws of 2021, are amended to read as follows:

Section 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; the state fire administrator 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; nine members appointed by the governor; 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; two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly; one member appointed by the minority leader of the senate; and one member appointed by the minority leader of the assembly. The task force shall report to the

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

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governor, the speaker of the assembly and the temporary president of the senate no later than [~~one year after the effective date of this act~~] **December 31, 2022**. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, recommendations concerning:

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

2. The utilization of community colleges, BOCES or state accredited high schools to train firefighters and the creation of pilot programs within community colleges or BOCES that will offer Firefighter 1 certification upon completion;

3. The feasibility and necessity of creation of a bureau within the office of fire prevention and control responsible for recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters;

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

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

6. Identification and recruitment incentives to assist in the recruitment of volunteer firefighters from under-represented and at-risk populations.

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

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be deemed repealed [~~April 1~~] **December 31**, 2022.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall be deemed to have been in full force and effect on and after November 11, 2020; provided, however, that the amendments to section 1 of chapter 258 of the laws of 2020 made by section one of this act shall not affect the repeal of such section and shall be deemed repealed therewith.