



PENNSYLVANIA FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES INSTITUTE

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Testimony of the Pa Fire and Emergency Services Institute

January 29, 2018

SB 1019

Chairs Vulakovich and Costa

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is Donald Konkle. I am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Service Institute and the Law and Legislative Chair of the Fireman's Association of the State of Pennsylvania. I have been involved in the fire service since 1967, including 37 years as a member of the Harrisburg Bureau of Fire; 27 of those years as Chief.

PFESI primary mission is to identify trends and challenges facing Pennsylvania's emergency services, obtain consensus on the solutions to those challenges and to educate policy makers and the emergency services about possible solutions.

PFESI and the Firemen's Association of the State of Pennsylvania support the passage of SB 1019. We are pleased to see this long overdue rewrite moving forward.

There are several issues not currently included in SB 1019 that we believe should be added:

Extend the 911 act for at least an additional 2 years.

Add the Fire Commissioner as a voting member of the 911 Advisory Board

Senate confirmation of the Fire Commissioner



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Currently several fire department are in default of loans received from the Volunteer Loan Assistance Program. The law currently requires that money received from the Fire and EMS Grant be applied towards satisfying a default. However, on occasion a company in default has not applied for a grant. We recommend that the Fire Commissioner be authorized to apply for the grant on behalf of a company in default.

Expand the Fire Departments that are eligible for 2% Volunteer Loan Assistance Program to include career fire departments.

Provide at least half the revenue raised from the sale of fireworks to fire and EMS. The fire service portion of the money should be used to develop and deliver web base training. The word volunteer should also be removed from the bill. Removing volunteer will allow paid fire departments to participate.

Frankly, all the fire service related bills should be reviewed, and the word volunteer should be removed from most if not all bills.

Don Konkle
PFESI Executive Director
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