

No. 1999-32

AN ACT

HB 371

Amending the act of July 15, 1976 (P.L.1036, No.208), entitled, as amended, "An act authorizing the indebtedness, with the approval of the electors, of fifty million dollars for loans to volunteer fire companies, volunteer ambulance services and volunteer rescue squads for the purpose of establishing or modernizing facilities to house fire fighting apparatus equipment, ambulances, and rescue vehicles, and for purchasing new fire fighting apparatus equipment, ambulances, and rescue vehicles, protective and communications equipment, and any other accessory equipment necessary for the proper performance of such organizations' duties," adding a definition; and further providing for assistance to volunteer fire companies.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Section 3 of the act of July 15, 1976 (P.L.1036, No.208), known as the Volunteer Fire Company, Ambulance Service and Rescue Squad Assistance Act, is amended by adding a definition to read:

Section 3. Definitions.—As used in this act:

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"National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards" means apparatus and equipment, including personal protective equipment, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of compliance with the applicable standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) provided:

(1) New apparatus shall be constructed to meet or exceed the standards in effect at the time of manufacture.

(2) Used fire fighting apparatus shall:

(i) in no instance meet lesser requirements than the standards for apparatus adopted by the National Fire Protection Association in 1991; and

(ii) beginning with the effective date of this amendatory act, meet the National Fire Protection Association standards for apparatus in effect at the time of original manufacture, provided, however, that no loans shall be considered or made for apparatus that cannot meet the National Fire Protection Association standards in effect no more than 12 years prior to the date of the application for loan financing.

(3) New equipment shall meet or exceed the standards in effect at the time of original manufacture.

(4) Used equipment shall meet or exceed the standards in effect at the time of original manufacture; however, no loans for used equipment shall be considered or made for equipment more than five years old at the time of application for loan assistance.

(5) In every instance, used equipment and apparatus shall meet the applicable National Fire Protection Association standards, as required above, at the time loan funds are advanced.

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Section 2. Section 4(a) of the act is amended by adding a clause to read:

Section 4. Assistance to Volunteer Fire Companies, Ambulance Service and Rescue Squads.—(a) The department is hereby authorized, upon application of any volunteer fire company, volunteer ambulance service and volunteer rescue squad, to make loans to said volunteer companies for the following purposes:

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(7) Purchasing Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting System (PennFIRS) hardware and software. A volunteer fire company shall be eligible to apply one time only for a loan of not more than \$2,000 or 75% of the cost of such acquisition, whichever is less, and with a term not exceeding five years for the purpose of acquiring the hardware and software necessary to participate in the Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting System. The Office of the State Fire Commissioner shall develop, at its discretion, such procedures and forms as it may deem necessary to facilitate loans for PennFIRS hardware and software. Such loans shall be secured as required by law.

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Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 25th day of June, A.D. 1999.

THOMAS J. RIDGE