COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 2025, Legislative Day No. 3

Bill No. 9-25

Councilmembers Young, Marks, Kach & Patoka

By the County Council, February 3, 2025

A BILL
ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services Fund

FOR the purpose of establishing a non-lapsing Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services Fund; defining certain related terms; providing for the purpose of the Fund; identifying the sources of financing to the Fund; requiring joint administration of the Fund by the Fire Chief and the Director of Budget and Finance; permitting certain uses of Fund monies; establishing eligibility requirements for a volunteer fire company to receive Fund monies; permitting the adoption of regulations; and generally relating to a fund for Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services.

BY adding

Sections 10-21-101 through 10-21-108
Article 10 – Finance
Title 21 – Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Services Fund

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter stricken from existing law.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from bill.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the Laws of Baltimore County read as follows:

ARTICLE 10 – FINANCE

TITLE 21 – FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES FUND

§ 10-21-101. ESTABLISHED.

THERE IS A NON-LAPSING FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES FUND.

§ 10-21-102. DEFINITIONS.

IN THIS TITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(1) "CHIEF" MEANS THE CHIEF OR DIRECTOR OF THE BALTIMORE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT.

(2) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE BALTIMORE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT.

(3) "DIRECTOR" MEANS THE DIRECTOR OF BUDGET AND FINANCE.

(4) "FUND" MEANS THE FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES FUND.

(5) "VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY" INCLUDES ANY VOLUNTEER FIRE, AMBULANCE, AND RESCUE COMPANIES.

§ 10-21-103. PURPOSE.

THE PURPOSE OF THE FUND IS TO PROMOTE THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF COUNTY RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES BY ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A DEDICATED FUND FOR FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CAREER AND VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES IN THE COUNTY.

§ 10-21-104. FUNDING.

(A) THE FUND MAY BE FINANCED FROM:

(1) CURRENT EXPENSE BUDGET FUNDS; AND

(2) CONTRIBUTIONS, DONATIONS, GIFTS, GRANTS, OR APPROPRIATIONS BY OR THROUGH THE UNITED STATES, THE STATE OF MARYLAND, ANY OTHER POLITICAL JURISDICTION OR QUASI-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION, OR ANY PRIVATE ENTITY.

(B) MONIES PROVIDED TO THE FUND UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL BE TREATED AS A GRANT TO THE FUND.

(C) THE FUND SHALL BE CHARGED FOR THE REASONABLE EXPENSES OF ADMINISTERING THE PROVISIONS OF THIS TITLE.

(D) THE FUND SHALL CONTINUE FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

(E) IF THE COUNTY COUNCIL DISSOLVES THE FUND, THE MONIES IN THE FUND AND ALL MONIES DUE AND OWING AT THE TIME SHALL REVERT TO THE GENERAL FUND OF THE COUNTY, OR IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF FEDERAL OR STATE GRANTS, AS APPLICABLE.

§ 10-21-105. ADMINISTRATION.

(A) THE CHIEF AND THE DIRECTOR SHALL JOINTLY ADMINISTER THE FUND ACCORDING TO ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES OF SOUND ACCOUNTING AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT.

(B) THE DIRECTOR SHALL MAINTAIN RECORDS OF THE FUND IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES.

(C) IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DIRECTOR, THE CHIEF SHALL DETERMINE THE METHOD AND PROCEDURES FOR AND TERMS OF ACCOUNTING FOR PAYMENTS BY OR CHARGES AGAINST THE FUND.

§ 10-21-106. USE OF FUNDS.

(A) IN GENERAL, THE FUND MAY BE USED FOR:

(1) THE MANAGEMENT, OPERATION, AND MAINTENANCE OF ALL FIRE, RESCUE, OR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES;

(2) THE PURCHASE, CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATION OF REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY NECESSARY OR INCIDENTAL TO FIRE, RESCUE, OR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES; OR

(3) THE OPERATION OF FIRE, RESCUE, OR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.

(B) IN ADDITION TO ANY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION OR TITLE 4 OF THIS ARTICLE, THE FUND MAY BE USED FOR:

(1) GEAR AND EQUIPMENT FOR VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING THE REPLACEMENT OR AUGMENTATION OF APPARATUS OWNED BY A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY;

(2) MAINTENANCE OR UPGRADES TO FACILITIES OWNED BY A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY, INCLUDING FIXTURES AND FURNITURE;

(3) TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS OR VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY STAFF;

(4) ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF TO SUPPORT A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY;

(5) VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION;

(6) AWARDS FOR THE LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS PROGRAM; OR

(7) STAND-BY SUPPORT PROVIDED BY A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY.

(C) ANY PERSON HIRED OR RETAINED BY A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY USING REVENUE ALLOCATED UNDER THIS TITLE IS NOT A COUNTY EMPLOYEE.

(D) THE COUNTY'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UNDER THIS TITLE MAY SUPPLEMENT OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, OR COUNTY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OR A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY.

§ 10-21-107. ELIGIBILITY TO RECEIVE FUNDS.

(A) AT LEAST 150 DAYS BEFORE THE END OF EACH FISCAL YEAR, EACH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY MAY SUBMIT TO THE CHIEF AN ANNUAL BUDGET SETTING FORTH THE NATURE, VOLUME, COSTS, AND OTHER FACTORS

CONCERNING THE ESTIMATE OF EXPENDITURES FOR THEIR OPERATIONS FOR THE ENSUING FISCAL YEAR.

(B) (1) THE CHIEF SHALL REVIEW AND COMPILE ALL ANNUAL BUDGETS RECEIVED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION AND SUBMIT THEM TO THE DIRECTOR AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(2) THE CHIEF SHALL ALSO INCLUDE A LIST OF ALL VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES THAT DID NOT SUBMIT AN ANNUAL BUDGET.

(C) A VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY THAT DOES NOT SUBMIT AN ANNUAL BUDGET TO THE CHIEF UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE MONIES FROM THE FUND UNTIL THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR FOR WHICH THE DIRECTOR RECEIVES A BUDGET FOR THAT VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY FROM THE CHIEF.

§ 10-21-108. REGULATIONS.

THE CHIEF AND THE DIRECTOR MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 3, TITLE 7 OF THE CODE TO CARRY OUT THE PURPOSES OF THIS TITLE.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that this Act shall take effect 45 days after its enactment.