

ASSEMBLY, No. 3488

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman BRIAN E. RUMPF

District 9 (Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean)

Assemblywoman DIANNE C. GOVE

District 9 (Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes forest firefighter death benefit.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing a forest firefighter death benefit and
2 supplementing Title 13 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. a. In addition to the benefit provided pursuant to R.S.34:15-
8 75, an annual payment of \$15,000 shall be paid to the widow or
9 widower of any forest firefighter who is compensated on an hourly
10 basis pursuant to R.S.13:9-12 and dies as a result of an accident met
11 in the actual performance of volunteer duties while working in an
12 official capacity as an employee of the forest fire service, provided
13 that the death was not the result of the forest firefighter's willful
14 negligence.

15 b. If there is no surviving widow or widower, the annual
16 amount established pursuant to subsection a. of this section shall be
17 payable to one surviving child, or shall be divided among and paid
18 in equal shares to the surviving children if there is more than one
19 surviving child. If there is no surviving widow, widower, or child,
20 the annual payment shall be payable to two surviving parents in
21 equal shares or, if there is only one surviving parent the entire
22 amount shall be payable to that parent. If there is no surviving
23 widow, widower, child, or parent, the payment shall be made to any
24 other beneficiary designated by the forest firefighter. The payments
25 shall continue until the initial beneficiary is deceased and shall not
26 be assigned by the initial beneficiary to a subsequent beneficiary.

27 For the purposes of this section, a child may be over or under the
28 age of majority at the time the annual payments commence.

29 c. The death benefit shall be payable if a report of the death is
30 filed with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection within 30
31 days following the accident, but the commissioner may waive the
32 time limit. The death benefits shall be paid by the State Treasurer
33 from the General Fund.

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35 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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37 STATEMENT

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39 The bill establishes an annual \$15,000 death benefit for forest
40 firefighters who die in the line of duty.

41 The Department of Environmental Protection employs part-time
42 forest firefighters who are compensated on an hourly basis. This
43 bill provides an annual \$15,000 payment to the families of these
44 forest firefighters who die in the line of duty. The death benefit is
45 to be made payable provided the report of death is filed within 30
46 days following the accident, but the Commissioner of
47 Environmental Protection may waive the time requirement. The
48 payment is to be made by the State Treasurer from the General
49 Fund.