

1 HB25  
2 214908-3  
3 By Representative Brown (C)  
4 RFD: State Government  
5 First Read: 11-JAN-22

SYNOPSIS: This bill would make legislative findings that volunteer fire departments are public in nature and perform a public purpose.

This bill would specify that a volunteer fire department may expend funds for equipping a fire station and for certain supplies for the delivery of fire protection services and training. This bill would further authorize a volunteer fire department to reimburse a volunteer fire fighter for mileage to and from a fire call.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to volunteer fire departments; to make legislative findings that volunteer fire departments are public in nature and perform a public purpose in the providing of fire protection services to the public; to specify that a volunteer fire department may expend funds of the department

1 for certain purposes for equipping a fire station and for  
2 certain supplies for the delivery of fire protection services  
3 and training; and to authorize a volunteer fire department to  
4 reimburse volunteer fire fighters for mileage to and from a  
5 fire call.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

7 Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares the  
8 following:

9 (1) Volunteer fire departments are public in nature  
10 and perform a public purpose in the providing of fire  
11 protection services to the public.

12 (2) Volunteer fire departments provide the front  
13 line of defense in the fire protection of homeowners in rural  
14 Alabama and in areas otherwise not served by paid fire  
15 services.

16 (3) Volunteer fire departments must have large  
17 numbers of fire fighters who are trained and dedicated to  
18 serving their communities at all times of the day and night on  
19 a voluntary basis.

20 Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the  
21 following words have the following meanings:

22 (1) FIRE STATION. The place, location, or building  
23 where a volunteer fire department maintains its fire fighting  
24 equipment.

25 (2) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. A volunteer fire  
26 department certified by the State Forestry Commission and

1 meeting the requirements of Section 9-3-17, Code of Alabama  
2 1975.

3 Section 3. (a) A volunteer fire department may use  
4 funds that are designated by the Department of Examiners of  
5 Public Accounts as restricted for purposes of accounting with  
6 the Department of Examiners of Public Accounts for the  
7 following purposes:

8 (1) The purchase of kitchen equipment for the fire  
9 station of the department, including refrigeration equipment,  
10 cooking equipment, microwaves, and other kitchen equipment.  
11 All kitchen equipment shall be the property of the volunteer  
12 fire department.

13 (2) The purchase of electrolyte replacement or  
14 sports drinks, water, and similar liquid sustenance in any  
15 form for use by volunteer firefighters on a fire call or at or  
16 during training exercises in the line of duty. The Legislature  
17 specifically finds that the expenditure of these funds are for  
18 a public purpose in providing for the health and safety of  
19 volunteer fire fighters.

20 (b) Any funds expended by a volunteer fire  
21 department pursuant to this section shall be accounted for by  
22 the volunteer fire department.

23 Section 4. A volunteer fire department may provide  
24 mileage reimbursement to a volunteer fire fighter up to the  
25 standard mileage rate of a state employee for actual mileage  
26 for the use of his or her personal motor vehicle to travel  
27 from his or her home or place of employment to a fire call and

1 for return to his or her home or place of employment. The  
2 mileage reimbursement claim shall be submitted by a signed  
3 statement of the volunteer fire fighter and shall be approved  
4 by the fire chief or assistant fire chief as verification that  
5 the volunteer fire fighter was present and performing duties  
6 at a fire call. The payment of mileage reimbursement by a  
7 volunteer fire department shall be authorized by a recorded  
8 vote of the board of the volunteer fire department at a  
9 regular meeting of the board.

10 Section 5. This act shall become effective  
11 immediately following its passage and approval by the  
12 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.