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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 2077

03/09/2021

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to public safety; establishing an advisory committee to the commissioner

1.3 of public safety for the certification of firefighters; appropriating money; amending

1.4 Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, subdivisions 1, 2, by adding

1.5 subdivisions.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.8 Subdivision 1. **Examination; requirements.** (a) The board must appoint an organization

1.9 ~~that is accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress~~ to prepare and

1.10 administer firefighter certification examinations. Firefighter certification examinations must

1.11 be designed to ensure and demonstrate competency that meets ~~the~~ applicable NFPA 1001

1.12 ~~standard or a national standard in areas including but not limited to:~~ standards.

1.13 ~~(1) fire prevention;~~

1.14 ~~(2) fire suppression; and~~

1.15 ~~(3) hazardous materials operations.~~

1.16 ~~(b) Certification must be obtained by the individual demonstrating competency in fire~~

1.17 ~~prevention and protection under the NFPA 1001 standard.~~

1.18 ~~(e)~~ (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit any requirement imposed

1.19 by a local fire department for more comprehensive training.

2.1 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, is amended by adding a subdivision to
2.2 read:

2.3 Subd. 1a. **Firefighter Certification Board; appointments; duties.** (a) By July 1, 2022,
2.4 the commissioner shall appoint a Firefighter Certification Board consisting of 18 members
2.5 as recommended by the following organizations:

2.6 (1) one member recommended by the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association;

2.7 (2) one member recommended by the Minnesota State Fire Department Association;

2.8 (3) one member recommended by the Minnesota Chapter of the International Association
2.9 of Arson Investigators;

2.10 (4) one member recommended by the Fire Marshals Association of Minnesota;

2.11 (5) one member recommended by the State Fire Marshal Division;

2.12 (6) one member recommended by the Minnesota State Fire Training Program
2.13 Coordinator's Group;

2.14 (7) two members recommended by Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters;

2.15 (8) one member recommended by a private fire training organization;

2.16 (9) one member recommended by regional fire training academies;

2.17 (10) five members recommended by the regional director of Greater Minnesota Fire
2.18 Service;

2.19 (11) one member recommended by the League of Minnesota Cities;

2.20 (12) one member recommended by the Minnesota Association of Townships; and

2.21 (13) one public member not affiliated or associated with any member or interest,
2.22 appointed by the commissioner.

2.23 (b) Each member shall serve an initial term of two years. The commissioner shall appoint
2.24 at least eight members from outside the metropolitan area.

2.25 (c) Appointed members serve without compensation.

2.26 (d) By January 1, 2023, the board must be accredited by the International Fire Service
2.27 Accreditation Congress and begin to carry out the following duties:

2.28 (1) establish qualifications for, appoint, and train examiners to conduct both the written
2.29 and skills tests required for firefighter certification;

2.30 (2) maintain a list of examiners that have met the qualifications;

- 3.1 (3) develop and maintain a program to determine and certify the competency of and
3.2 issue certificates to individuals who pass examinations based on the NFPA fire service
3.3 professional qualifications and other standards approved by the certification assembly;
3.4 (4) make recommendations to the legislature to improve the quality of firefighter training;
3.5 (5) conduct studies and surveys and make reports to the commissioner; and
3.6 (6) conduct other activities as necessary to carry out these duties.
3.7 (e) The commissioner shall provide the necessary staff and support to the board and may
3.8 charge back any costs related to the board to the special account created in subdivision 4.

3.9 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

3.10 Subd. 2. **Eligibility for certification examination.** Except as provided in subdivision
3.11 3, any person may take the firefighter certification examination who has successfully
3.12 completed the following:

- 3.13 (1)(i) a firefighter course from a postsecondary educational institution, an accredited
3.14 institution of higher learning, or another entity that teaches a course that has been approved
3.15 by the board; or (ii) an apprenticeship or cadet program maintained by a Minnesota fire
3.16 department that has been approved by the ~~board~~ Board of Firefighter Training and Education;
3.17 and
3.18 (2) a skills-oriented basic training course.

3.19 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, is amended by adding a subdivision to
3.20 read:

3.21 Subd. 4. **Revenues.** (a) The board and its programs shall be funded through fees collected
3.22 from individuals who apply for certification and for certification renewal.

3.23 (b) A firefighter certification account is created in the special revenue fund. The account
3.24 consists of the fees collected under this section and any other money donated, allotted,
3.25 transferred, or otherwise provided to the account. Money in the account is annually
3.26 appropriated to the commissioner to pay costs incurred under this section.

3.27 (c) The board may accept funding from the fire safety account established in section
3.28 297I.06 for special or distinctive projects.

3.29 (d) The board shall recommend a certification fee schedule to the commissioner. The
3.30 commissioner shall set the fee on an annual basis to coincide with the state's fiscal year.

4.1 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 299N.04, is amended by adding a subdivision to
4.2 read:

4.3 Subd. 5. **Definitions.** (a) Unless otherwise indicated, for purposes of this section, the
4.4 terms in this subdivision have the meanings given.

4.5 (b) "Board" means the Firefighter Certification Board established under subdivision 1a.

4.6 (c) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of public safety.