

## **9-1-1 BOARDS: ADD FIREFIGHTER**

### **House Bill 5289 (Substitute H-1) First Analysis (10-29-97)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Ilona Varga**  
**Committee: Regulatory Affairs**

#### ***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

The Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act requires a county to create an emergency telephone district board if it creates a consolidated dispatch within a district. A "consolidated dispatch" means a countywide or regional emergency dispatch service that provides dispatch service for 75 percent or more of the law enforcement, fire fighting, emergency medical service, and other emergency service agencies within the geographical area of a 9-1-1 service district or serves 75 percent or more of the population within a 9-1-1 service district. The membership of a board has to include a designated representative of the county sheriff and a representative of the state police, designated by the director. If the district consists of more than one county, the sheriff representative is appointed by the president of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association.

The act also created an emergency telephone service committee within the Department of State Police to develop statewide standards and model system considerations, and to make other recommendations for emergency telephone services. The committee consists of 17 members who include, among others, the directors of the Departments of State Police and Community Health, members of the general public, and representatives from the Michigan Public Service Commission, Sheriffs' Association, Association of Chiefs of Police, Fire Chiefs Association, Michigan Association of Counties, National Emergency Number Association, Fraternal Order of Police, State Troopers Association, and other related associations.

Increasingly, the role of firefighters has changed from being almost totally confined to putting out fires to often being the first responders on the scene of a medical situation. In addition, firefighters also provide assistance with toxic spills and wastes. Their changing role makes firefighters highly dependent on 9-1-1 emergency telephone districts for their dispatching capabilities. However, current law requires local districts to appoint board members who represent sheriffs and state police, but not firefighters. In like manner, the state emergency telephone service committee also requires the

appointment of representatives from various law enforcement associations, but only one of the positions is filled by a person representing firefighters. Some feel that this was merely an oversight, and that firefighters can make a valuable contribution to both local emergency telephone district boards and the state committee in the coordination and delivery of services of 9-1-1 emergency services. Therefore, legislation has been proposed to require that counties include a firefighter as a member of an emergency telephone district board, and that a full-time firefighter be appointed to the state emergency telephone service committee.

#### ***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend the Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act to require that a firefighter be included as a member of a county emergency telephone district board. The bill would also increase the membership of the state emergency telephone service committee from 17 members to 18 members to include the president of the Michigan State Firefighters Union, or his or her designated representative.

(Note: The chapter pertaining to the state emergency telephone service committee will be repealed as of December 31, 1998 under the provisions of MCL 484.1707. The entire act will be repealed effective December 31, 2002 under the provisions of Public Act 29 of 1994.)

MCL 484.1320 and 484.1703

#### ***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

According to the House Fiscal Agency, there would be no fiscal impact on local governments. The agency reports that by adding another member to the state emergency telephone service committee, the bill could result in an indeterminate cost increase to the state. However, any increase should be minimal. (10-23-97)

**ARGUMENTS:*****For:***

Since firefighters are playing an increasing role as medical first responders and as responders to toxic spills in addition to their traditional role of fighting fires, it is important that they share in representation on both local boards and the state committee for emergency services. Since 9-1-1 dispatchers must coordinate services between law enforcement personnel, medical personnel, paramedics, and firefighters, the firefighters should be provided an opportunity to have input into the delivery of 9-1-1 emergency services. The bill would correct what is believed by some to be an oversight in not including a firefighter on a local 9-1-1 board. Also, though under current law the president of the Michigan Fire Chiefs Association is appointed to the state 9-1-1 committee, the bill would provide for more equal representation between firefighters and law enforcement personnel, who have representatives of the Deputy Sheriffs Association, the Michigan Fraternal Organization of Police, and the Michigan State Police Troopers Association in addition to the director of the Department of State Police and representatives from the Michigan Sheriffs' Association and the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police.

***For:***

The bill would not result in an unfunded mandate for counties. The law requires only that an emergency district board be created under certain criteria, and the bill would require that one of the members be a firefighter. As it is up to each county to determine the number of board members, and to decide whether to reimburse board members for travel expenses or to give a per diem compensation, there would be no Headlee implications. The cost to the state to increase the emergency telephone service committee membership by one person should be minimal, if any.

**POSITIONS:**

The Michigan State Fire Fighters Union supports the bill. (10-23-97)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.