

25103551D

HOUSE BILL NO. 2504

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 8, 2025

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 2 of Title 9.1 sections numbered 9.1-208.2 and 9.1-208.3, relating to Emergency Vehicles and Housing for Emergency Services Volunteers Grant Programs established; reports.*

Patron—Runion

Referred to Committee on Appropriations

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 2 of Title 9.1 sections numbered 9.1-208.2 and 9.1-208.3 as follows:

§ 9.1-208.2. Emergency Vehicles Grant Program.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Department" means the Department of Fire Programs.

"Eligible locality" means any county, city, or town that, in accordance with the provisions of § 27-6.02, provides firefighting services to its citizens by (i) establishing a fire department as a department of government pursuant to § 27-6.1 or (ii) contracting with or providing for the provision of firefighting services by a fire company established pursuant to § 27-8.

"Emergency vehicle" means the same as that term is defined in § 46.2-920.

"Program" means the Emergency Vehicles Grant Program established in this section.

B. The Department shall establish the Emergency Vehicles Grant Program to assist eligible localities in acquiring emergency vehicles to be used in the performance of volunteer emergency services, regardless of whether such vehicle is on or off road.

C. Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly, the Department shall award eligible localities grants of up to \$10,000 on a first-come, first-served basis for the purposes described in subsection B. No eligible locality shall receive more than \$10,000 per fiscal year from such grants. To apply for a grant, an eligible locality shall submit an application to the Department, which shall include (i) the number of emergency vehicles purchased during the taxable year and (ii) receipts for expenses incurred for such purchases.

D. No later than October 1 of any year in which funds are made available for the Program, each grant recipient shall submit a report to the Department. Such report shall include information concerning the amount of money spent on the acquisition and use of emergency service vehicles and other information as deemed necessary or helpful by the Department.

E. No later than January 1 of any year in which funds are made available for the Program, the Department shall submit a summarized report of the information received pursuant to subsection D to the House Committee on General Laws, the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology, the House Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations.

§ 9.1-208.3. Housing for Emergency Services Volunteers Grant Program.

A. For purposes of this section:

"Department" means the Department of Fire Programs.

"Eligible educational institution" means any public institution of higher education and any private institution of higher education, as those terms are defined in § 23.1-100.

"Eligible locality" means a county, city, or town that provides living quarters for emergency services volunteers and, in accordance with the provisions of § 27-6.02, provides firefighting services to its citizens by (i) establishing a fire department as a department of government pursuant to § 27-6.1 or (ii) contracting with or providing for the provision of firefighting services by a fire company established pursuant to § 27-8.

"Emergency services volunteer" means any volunteer firefighter, as that term is defined in § 27-42, who is contracted with, or whose services are secured by, the governing body of a locality for fire protection in accordance with the provisions of § 27-23.1, has completed a training program developed by the Executive Director of the Department in accordance with § 27-23.11, and is currently enrolled in an eligible educational institution and making satisfactory progress, academic or otherwise, including maintaining a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 or its equivalent, toward the attainment of a degree with such educational institution.

"Living quarters" means dormitories, living facilities, or other multi-unit housing facilities, so long as such structure includes adequate bathroom and dormitory facilities for the occupancy of such structure by emergency services volunteers.

59 *"Program" means the Housing for Emergency Services Volunteers Grant Program.*

60 *B. The Department shall establish the Housing for Emergency Services Volunteers Grant Program to*
61 *assist eligible localities in providing emergency services volunteers with living quarters at no charge to such*
62 *volunteers. Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly, the Department shall award eligible localities*
63 *grants for providing emergency services volunteers with living quarters at no charge to such volunteers.*
64 *During the first six months of the fiscal year, grants shall be allocated on a pro rata basis such that each*
65 *congressional district in the Commonwealth is eligible to claim the same amount from such amounts as may*
66 *be appropriated for such fiscal year. During the second six months of the fiscal year, any funds for which no*
67 *application for grants therefrom has been made shall be distributed to all eligible localities on a first-come,*
68 *first-served basis. Unused funds for the preceding fiscal year shall be carried forward and added to any*
69 *appropriation for such funds for the next year.*

70 *C. To apply for a grant, an eligible locality in the Commonwealth shall submit an application to the*
71 *Department, which shall include (i) the number of emergency services volunteers offered living quarters with*
72 *in such locality and (ii) the number of living quarters available to such volunteers within such locality.*

73 *D. No later than October 1 of any year in which funds are made available for the Program, each grant*
74 *recipient shall submit a report to the Department. Such report shall include information concerning the*
75 *amount of money spent on providing living quarters to emergency services volunteers, including any increase*
76 *in the cost of utilities, expenses incurred for providing adequate bedding or cooking appliances, and costs*
77 *incurred for construction of facilities or rehabilitation of existing structures to ensure emergency services*
78 *volunteers have safe and appropriate sleeping and restroom facilities.*

79 *E. No later than January 1 of any year in which funds are made available for the Program, the*
80 *Department shall submit a summarized report of the information received pursuant to subsection D to the*
81 *House Committee on General Laws, the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology, the House*
82 *Committee on Appropriations, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations.*

83 **2. That the first report required pursuant to subsection D of § 9.1-208.2 of the Code of Virginia, as**
84 **created by this act, and the first report required pursuant to subsection D of § 9.1-208.3 of the Code of**
85 **Virginia, as created by this act, shall be due no later than October 1, 2026.**

86 **3. That the first summarized report required pursuant to subsection E of § 9.1-208.2 of the Code of**
87 **Virginia, as created by this act, and the first summarized report required pursuant to subsection E of §**
88 **9.1-208.3 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act, shall be due no later than January 1, 2027.**