

**Department of Planning and Budget
2025 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement**

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB 2495

Patron: Askew

Bill Title: Firefighters and emergency medical services providers; collective bargaining

Bill Summary: Authorizes firefighters and emergency medical services providers employed by a political subdivision of the Commonwealth to engage in collective bargaining through labor organizations or other designated representatives. The bill establishes the Fire Service Cooperation Board to administer its provisions. The bill provides for the appointment of a three-member board of arbitration regarding any dispute arising between an employer and firefighters or emergency medical services providers. Under the bill, determinations made by such board of arbitration are final on a disputed issue and are binding on the parties involved. The bill has a delayed effective date of January 1, 2026.

Budget Amendment Necessary: See Fiscal Analysis **Items Impacted:** 349

Explanation: It is anticipated that this bill will result in a general fund expenditure impact to the Department of Labor and Industry; the bill may also impact the Office of the Attorney General.

Fiscal Summary: The Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) would require \$388,190 from the general fund.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2025</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>
DOLI	-	\$ 194,095	\$ 388,190	\$ 388,190	\$ 388,190	\$ 388,190

Fiscal Analysis: The fiscal impact will depend on the actual number collective bargaining elections, claims, investigations, determinations, and regulations; however, DOLI estimates the fiscal impact will be \$194,095 in FY 2026, and \$383,190 annually beginning in FY 2027. The workload associated with this bill for the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is indeterminate; however, if the OAG is required to increase staffing levels to meet the demand, each additional position would create an additional expense of \$144,160 annualized.

The bill establishes a Fire Service Cooperation Board which would be funded through the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI). The board would be comprised of three members, each of whom would be compensated at the rate of a hearing officer (\$65.20 per hour). DOLI assumes that to hold six meetings per year and conduct reasonable planning, review, and informal conferences each member would work approximately 200 hours

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per year (\$37,500 each). Board members would also be compensated for travel, DOLI estimates this cost to be \$2,400 each. The total annual impact of three board members is \$119,700.

Additionally, the bill provides that the board may “employ, at its discretion, such employees as may be necessary and fix their compensation to be payable from funds made available to the Board.” DOLI estimates based on similar boards in the Commonwealth that the Board’s workload will require one Coordinator (\$153,003) and one Analyst (\$115,487). However, depending on the actual number of collective bargaining elections, claims, investigations, determinations, and regulations, staffing needs may vary.

The bill directs the Office of the Attorney General to provide legal services for the Board. It is assumed that the Board would be expected to reimburse the Office for any expenses incurred. The additional workload for OAG as a result of the bill is indeterminate and based on the number of reported violations. If OAG is required to increase staffing levels to meet the demand, each additional position would create an additional expense of \$144,160 each year.

Other: The companion to this bill, SB 1401, was incorporated into SB 917.