



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 630**

February Session, 2022

Substitute House Bill No. 5213

*House of Representatives, April 26, 2022*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. WALKER of the 93rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENTS TO VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES FOR RESPONDING TO CALLS ON LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAYS AND AT CERTAIN OTHER LOCATIONS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2022*) The State Fire Administrator  
2 shall pay seven hundred dollars to each volunteer fire company for each  
3 call to which it responds on (1) a limited access highway, designated  
4 pursuant to section 13b-27 of the general statutes, (2) the section of the  
5 highway known as the Berlin Turnpike, which begins at the end of the  
6 existing Wilbur Cross Parkway in the town of Meriden and extends  
7 northerly along Route 15 to the beginning of a section of limited access  
8 highway in the town of Wethersfield known as South Meadows  
9 Expressway, or (3) the section of Route 8 in the town of Beacon Falls  
10 which is within the boundaries of the Naugatuck State Forest. The State  
11 Fire Administrator may designate a volunteer fire company to be  
12 responsible for the extinguishing of fires on any portion of such  
13 highways for which no fire protection is otherwise provided and, in  
14 each such case, shall pay to such company seven hundred dollars per



The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Emergency Services and Public Protection, Dept.	GF - Cost	1.8 to 2.5 million	1.8 to 2.5 million

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill requires the State Fire Administrator to pay \$700 to each volunteer fire company that responds to calls on certain highways resulting in a cost to the state of \$1.8 million to \$2.5 million per year. It is anticipated that there will be 2,500 to 3,500 calls per year. <sup>1</sup>

The bill also requires the State Fire Administrator to pay \$700 per year to volunteer fire companies to provide fire protection on certain highways where no fire protection is currently provided. This results in no fiscal impact to the state because all portions of these highways currently have fire protection.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of calls responded to by volunteer fire companies.

<sup>1</sup> In 2003 (the last year the state provided reimbursement for responding to these calls) there were 2,400 calls.

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**OLR Bill Analysis**

**HB 5213**

***AN ACT CONCERNING PAYMENTS TO VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES FOR RESPONDING TO CALLS ON LIMITED ACCESS HIGHWAYS AND AT CERTAIN OTHER LOCATIONS.***

**SUMMARY**

This bill requires the state to pay volunteer fire companies for responding to calls on designated highways. Under the bill, the State Fire Administrator must pay \$700 per call to volunteer fire companies responding to calls on:

1. limited access highways;
2. the section of the Berlin Turnpike, which begins at the end of the Wilbur Cross Parkway in Meriden and extends north along Route 15 to the South Meadows Expressway in Wethersfield; and
3. the section of Route 8 in Beacon Falls within the Naugatuck State Forest.

The bill additionally authorizes the State Fire Administrator to make volunteer fire companies responsible for extinguishing fires on any portion of these highways where no fire protection is otherwise provided. He must pay these companies an additional \$700 per year for doing so.

The bill also eliminates a defunct supplemental grant award remittance program for volunteer fire companies that provide emergency response services on these same highways.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

**BACKGROUND**

**Limited Access Highways**

The Department of Transportation commissioner, with the governor and attorney general’s advice and consent, designates as limited access highways the state highways (or portion of them) that are accessible only at highway intersections or designated points (CGS § 13b-27). The Office of the State Traffic Administration annually publishes a list of these limited access highways (CGS § 14-298).

**Limited Access Highway Reimbursement Program**

Under prior law, the Limited Access Highway Reimbursement Program paid volunteer fire companies \$100 per call for responding to calls on the same highways described above (CGS § 13a-248). The legislature eliminated the program in 2003, as part of the FY 04-05 budget implementation act. It subsequently enacted the supplemental grant award remittance program in 2005.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference - APP  
Yea 23 Nay 0 (03/08/2022)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable  
Yea 50 Nay 0 (04/07/2022)