

# SENATE BILL 615

L2

01r1825  
CF HB 733

---

By: **Senator Edwards**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2010

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Garrett County – Volunteer Fire Departments and Rescue Squads –**  
3 **Emergency Services Board**

4 FOR the purpose of altering certain taxes on certain real property and personal  
5 property in Garrett County that are to be paid to certain volunteer fire  
6 departments; requiring the Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County  
7 to make certain payments to certain volunteer fire departments and rescue  
8 squads at certain times; providing that the amounts paid to volunteer fire  
9 departments in Garrett County shall be equivalent; requiring that certain funds  
10 received by certain volunteer fire departments and rescue squads in Garrett  
11 County be used for certain expenditures; requiring volunteer fire departments  
12 and rescue squads in Garrett County to file certain reports annually;  
13 authorizing the Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County to reserve  
14 the right to withhold certain funds from a fire department or rescue squad that  
15 fails to meet certain standards and policies under certain circumstances;  
16 providing that the Garrett County Emergency Services Board shall be the final  
17 step in the establishment of primary and secondary service areas for fire,  
18 rescue, and ambulance services in Garrett County and is responsible for final  
19 resolution of certain disputes; providing that the Emergency Services Board has  
20 certain jurisdiction regardless of whether a certain provider of fire, rescue, or  
21 ambulance service is a member of the Garrett County Volunteer Fire and  
22 Rescue Association, Inc.; establishing a Garrett County Emergency Services  
23 Board; providing for the membership and the chair of the Emergency Services  
24 Board; providing for the appointment of members and the terms of the members  
25 of the Emergency Services Board; stating the mission of the Emergency Services  
26 Board; requiring the Emergency Services Board to develop and recommend to  
27 the Board of County Commissioners certain policies and standard operating  
28 procedures; requiring certain policies and standard operating procedures to  
29 comply with certain State and federal agency established standards, policies,  
30 practices, and protocols; requiring the Emergency Services Board to consult  
31 with certain persons before adopting certain proposed policies and standard

---

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 operating procedures; establishing certain duties of the Emergency Services  
 2 Board; altering a certain definition; altering the amount of a certain tax on  
 3 certain real property in Garrett County paid to rescue squads in Garrett  
 4 County; and generally relating to fire and rescue services in Garrett County.

5 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 6 The Public Local Laws of Garrett County  
 7 Section 32.01(A)  
 8 Article 12 – Public Local Laws of Maryland  
 9 (2005 Edition and November 2009 Supplement, as amended)  
 10 (As enacted by Chapter 45 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2007)

11 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
 12 The Public Local Laws of Garrett County  
 13 Section 32.01(B) and (C), 32.04, and 35.05  
 14 Article 12 – Public Local Laws of Maryland  
 15 (2005 Edition and November 2009 Supplement, as amended)

16 BY adding to  
 17 The Public Local Laws of Garrett County  
 18 Section 32.90  
 19 Article 12 – Public Local Laws of Maryland  
 20 (2005 Edition and November 2009 Supplement, as amended)

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
 22 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

23 **Article 12 – Garrett County**

24 32.01.

25 (A) The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County is authorized and  
 26 directed to levy annually a tax of [at least two cents (\$0.02) and no more than] **UP TO**  
 27 **four cents (\$0.04)** per one hundred dollars (\$100.) of assessed value of real property in  
 28 Garrett County other than operating real property of a public utility and [at least five  
 29 cents (\$0.05) and no more than] **UP TO** ten cents (\$0.10) per one hundred dollars  
 30 (\$100.) of assessed value of personal property and operating real property of a public  
 31 utility, and said levy is to be paid to the volunteer fire departments existing now or  
 32 organized in the future. **THE BOARD SHALL MAKE THE PAYMENTS TWICE A YEAR**  
 33 **IN DECEMBER AND JUNE.** The amounts paid to [any] **EACH** volunteer fire  
 34 department shall be [determined jointly by one (1) representative of each of said  
 35 volunteer fire departments and the County Commissioners] **EQUIVALENT.**

36 (B) [All sums] **ANY COUNTY FUNDS** received by any volunteer fire  
 37 department **UNDER THIS SECTION** shall be expended only for [the]:

1           **(1)** THE purchase, maintenance and repair of fire-fighting apparatus  
2 and equipment [and the];

3           **(2)** THE construction, maintenance or repair of [buildings]  
4 **FACILITIES AND GROUNDS** necessary for:

5                   **A.** [fire-fighting] **FIRE-FIGHTING** purposes;

6                   **B.** **HOSTING COMMUNITY EVENTS;**

7                   **C.** **PROVIDING EMERGENCY SHELTER; OR**

8                   **D.** **ENHANCING FUND-RAISING OR OPERATIONS**  
9 **CAPABILITY;**

10           **(3)** THE PROMOTION, RETENTION, OR RECRUITMENT OF  
11 **MEMBERSHIP; AND**

12           **(4)** OTHER SPECIAL EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING HARDSHIPS OR  
13 **OTHER EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE:**

14                   **A.** THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE GARRETT COUNTY  
15 **EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD; AND**

16                   **B.** CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE  
17 **GARRETT COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION.**

18           **(C)** [The County Commissioners shall pay over all sums required under this  
19 section not later than July 1 of each year.] Every volunteer fire department receiving  
20 any sum under this section shall file [an annual report] **ANNUALLY SIGNED COPIES**  
21 **OF FEDERAL FORM 990 AND FORM 990 SCHEDULE A** with the **BOARD OF** County  
22 Commissioners. **A VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT FILE FEDERAL**  
23 **FORM 990 EZ WITH THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS UNDER THIS**  
24 **SECTION. IF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE CHANGES, AMENDS, OR**  
25 **REPLACES FORM 990 AND FORM 990 SCHEDULE A WITH A REPORT THAT IS TO**  
26 **BE FILED ANNUALLY, A FULLY EXECUTED COPY OF THAT REPORT WITH ALL**  
27 **CORRESPONDING SCHEDULES SHALL BE FILED WITH THE BOARD OF COUNTY**  
28 **COMMISSIONERS.**

29           **(D)** THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MAY RESERVE THE  
30 RIGHT TO WITHHOLD ANY OR ALL OF THE FUNDS FROM A FIRE DEPARTMENT  
31 THAT FAILS TO MEET ALL STANDARDS AND POLICIES RECOMMENDED BY THE  
32 **GARRETT COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD.**

1 32.04.

2 (A) The Garrett County [Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association, Inc., is  
3 responsible for] **EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD SHALL BE THE FINAL STEP IN** the  
4 establishment of primary and secondary service areas for fire, rescue and ambulance  
5 services in Garrett County and [for resolving any dispute] **SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE**  
6 **FOR FINAL RESOLUTION OF ANY DISPUTES** concerning service areas, mutual aid  
7 agreements, or communications. **PARTIES THAT MAY HAVE A DISPUTE SHALL**  
8 **FIRST SEEK RESOLUTION BY:**

9 (1) **MUTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES;**  
10 **AND**

11 (2) **A REVIEW AND HEARING AS ESTABLISHED BY THE GARRETT**  
12 **COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION, INC.**

13 (B) The Garrett County [Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association, Inc.,]  
14 **EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD** has jurisdiction under division (A) of this section  
15 regardless of whether a provider of the fire, rescue or ambulance service is a member  
16 of the **GARRETT COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE Association, INC.**

17 32.90.

18 (A) (1) **THERE IS A GARRETT COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES**  
19 **BOARD ESTABLISHED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF**  
20 **GARRETT COUNTY.**

21 (2) **THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD CONSISTS OF THE**  
22 **FOLLOWING MEMBERS:**

23 A. **ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GARRETT COUNTY**  
24 **FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION, APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY**  
25 **COMMISSIONERS;**

26 B. **ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GARRETT COUNTY**  
27 **CHIEF'S COMMITTEE, APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY**  
28 **COMMISSIONERS;**

29 C. **ONE MEMBER RECOMMENDED BY THE SOUTHERN**  
30 **GARRETT RESCUE SQUAD, APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY**  
31 **COMMISSIONERS;**

1                   **D. ONE MEMBER RECOMMENDED BY THE NORTHERN**  
2 **GARRETT RESCUE SQUAD, APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY**  
3 **COMMISSIONERS;**

4                   **E. THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY**  
5 **MANAGEMENT; AND**

6                   **F. THREE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC,**  
7 **APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.**

8                   **(3) A. THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SHALL**  
9 **APPOINT THE MEMBERS THAT REPRESENT THE GARRETT COUNTY FIRE AND**  
10 **RESCUE ASSOCIATION, THE GARRETT COUNTY CHIEF'S COMMITTEE, THE**  
11 **SOUTHERN GARRETT RESCUE SQUAD, AND THE NORTHERN GARRETT RESCUE**  
12 **SQUAD FROM A LIST OF AT LEAST THREE NOMINATIONS FOR EACH POSITION.**

13                   **B. THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MAY REJECT**  
14 **ANY NOMINATION FOR MEMBERSHIP.**

15                   **(4) THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS SHALL APPOINT**  
16 **ONE OF THE MEMBERS FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC AS CHAIR.**

17                   **(5) A. THE TERM OF A MEMBER IS 2 YEARS.**

18                   **B. THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MAY**  
19 **REAPPOINT A MEMBER TO ONE OR MORE ADDITIONAL TERMS.**

20                   **(B) THE MISSION OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD IS TO**  
21 **PROMOTE THE EFFECTIVE DELIVERY AND THE HIGHEST QUALITY OF**  
22 **EMERGENCY FIRE AND EMS SERVICES TO THE CITIZENS AND VISITORS OF**  
23 **GARRETT COUNTY.**

24                   **(C) (1) THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD SHALL DEVELOP AND**  
25 **RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS POLICIES AND**  
26 **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS**  
27 **AND RESCUE SQUADS IN THE COUNTY, INCLUDING MONITORING OF STANDARDS**  
28 **RELATING TO TRAINING, EQUIPMENT SAFETY, TESTING, AND FIT-TESTING.**

29                   **(2) THE POLICIES AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**  
30 **RECOMMENDED BY THE GARRETT COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION TO**  
31 **THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD AND ADOPTED BY THE EMERGENCY**  
32 **SERVICES BOARD SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL RELEVANT STATE AND FEDERAL**  
33 **AGENCY ESTABLISHED STANDARDS, POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND PROTOCOLS.**

1           **(3) BEFORE ADOPTING ANY PROPOSED POLICIES AND STANDARD**  
2 **OPERATING PROCEDURES, THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD SHALL CONSULT**  
3 **WITH THE GARRETT COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION,**  
4 **INC., AND THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COUNCIL.**

5           **(D) IN ADDITION TO DEVELOPING AND RECOMMENDING STANDARDS**  
6 **AND POLICIES, THE EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD SHALL:**

7           **(1) OFFER ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING GRANT FUNDING, GRANT**  
8 **PREPARATION, AND OTHERWISE PROVIDE DIRECTION AND SUPPORT FOR**  
9 **SOLUTIONS TO SPECIAL FUNDING NEEDS;**

10           **(2) EVALUATE STAFFING, DISPATCH, AND COMMUNICATIONS**  
11 **ISSUES AND RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS WITH INPUT REQUESTED BY THE**  
12 **GARRETT COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION, INC.;**

13           **(3) IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GARRETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT**  
14 **OF FINANCIAL SERVICES, ENSURE THAT MEMBERS OF THE GARRETT COUNTY**  
15 **VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION, INC., REMAIN IN COMPLIANCE**  
16 **WITH ALL NECESSARY FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES AND THE LENGTH OF SERVICE**  
17 **AWARD PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY; AND**

18           **(4) IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE MEDICAL ADVISOR FOR**  
19 **GARRETT COUNTY, PROVIDE OVERSIGHT OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AND**  
20 **IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE GARRETT COUNTY**  
21 **MEDICAL REVIEW BOARD.**

22 35.05.

23           **(A) In this section, rescue squad means a voluntary, nonprofit [rescue squad**  
24 **located in Garrett County] ENTITY THAT PROVIDES PRE-HOSPITAL EMERGENCY**  
25 **SERVICES AND PATIENT TRANSPORT.**

26           **(B) (1) The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County shall**  
27 **appropriate and pay to rescue squads in the county a total amount per year [equal to**  
28 **not less than] OF UP TO \$0.008 per hundred dollars on the assessable real property in**  
29 **Garrett County other than operating real property of a public utility and UP TO \$0.02**  
30 **per hundred dollars on the assessable personal property and operating real property of**  
31 **a public utility.**

32           **(2) The Board of County Commissioners of Garrett County shall make**  
33 **the payments [semiannually] TWICE A YEAR in [January] DECEMBER and June.**

1           (3)    The payments to each rescue squad shall be equivalent.

2           (C)    A rescue squad shall use the funds for:

3           (1)    The purchase, maintenance and repair of rescue apparatus and  
4 equipment; [or]

5           (2)    [The maintenance and repair of buildings necessary for rescue  
6 squad operations] **THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, OR REPAIR OF  
7 FACILITIES AND GROUNDS NECESSARY FOR:**

8                   A.    **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PURPOSES;**

9                   B.    **HOSTING COMMUNITY EVENTS;**

10                  C.    **PROVIDING EMERGENCY SHELTER; OR**

11                  D.    **ENHANCING    FUND-RAISING    OR    OPERATIONS  
12 CAPABILITY;**

13                  (3)    **THE PROMOTION, RETENTION, OR RECRUITMENT OF  
14 MEMBERSHIP; OR**

15                  (4)    **OTHER SPECIAL EXPENDITURES, INCLUDING HARDSHIPS OR  
16 OTHER EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES THAT HAVE:**

17                           A.    **THE PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE GARRETT COUNTY  
18 EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD; AND**

19                           B.    **CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE  
20 GARRETT COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE ASSOCIATION.**

21           **(D)    THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF GARRETT COUNTY  
22 MAY RESERVE THE RIGHT TO WITHHOLD ANY OR ALL OF THE FUNDS FROM A  
23 RESCUE SQUAD THAT FAILS TO MEET ALL STANDARDS AND POLICIES  
24 RECOMMENDED BY THE GARRETT COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD TO  
25 THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.**

26           **[(D)] (E)    A rescue squad RECEIVING FUNDING UNDER THIS SECTION  
27 shall file annually [a report on the] SIGNED COPIES OF FEDERAL FORM 990 AND  
28 FORM 990 SCHEDULE A, INCLUDING receipt and disbursement of funds received  
29 under this chapter WITH THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS. A RESCUE  
30 SQUAD MAY NOT FILE FEDERAL FORM 990 EZ WITH THE COUNTY  
31 COMMISSIONERS UNDER THIS SECTION. IF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE**

1 **CHANGES, AMENDS, OR REPLACES FORM 990 AND FORM 990 SCHEDULE A WITH**  
2 **A REPORT THAT IS TO BE FILED ANNUALLY, A FULLY EXECUTED COPY OF THAT**  
3 **REPORT WITH ALL CORRESPONDING SCHEDULES SHALL BE FILED WITH THE**  
4 **COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.**

5           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
6 July 1, 2010.