

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 976 (Delegate Otto)

Environment and Transportation

Budget and Taxation

Somerset County - Fire Companies - Appropriations

This bill increases the amount of funds that the Somerset County Commissioners must appropriate annually to the volunteer fire companies in Somerset County for fiscal 2025 through 2030. The required appropriation for fiscal 2030 will remain in effect for subsequent years unless altered by future legislation. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Somerset County expenditures for volunteer fire companies increase by \$7,300 in FY 2025 and by \$46,200 in FY 2030. County revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: **Exhibit 1** details the increase in the Somerset County appropriation for each volunteer fire company for fiscal 2025 through 2030.

Exhibit 1
Somerset County Volunteer Fire Companies – Change in Annual Appropriations

	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>	<u>FY 2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY 2030</u>
Crisfield VFC						
Current Law	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946
Under Bill	76,445	77,974	79,533	81,124	82,747	84,401
Change	1,499	3,028	4,587	6,178	7,800	9,455
Princess Anne VFC						
Current Law	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946	\$74,946
Under Bill	76,445	77,974	79,533	81,124	82,747	84,401
Change	1,499	3,028	4,587	6,178	7,800	9,455
Marion VFC						
Current Law	\$47,749	\$47,749	\$47,749	\$47,749	\$47,749	\$47,749
Under Bill	48,704	49,678	50,672	51,685	52,719	53,773
Change	955	1,929	2,923	3,936	4,970	6,024
Deal Island – Chance VFC						
Current Law	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555
Under Bill	42,387	43,234	44,099	44,981	45,881	46,798
Change	831	1,679	2,544	3,426	4,325	5,243
Ewell FD						
Current Law	\$33,109	\$33,109	\$33,109	\$33,109	\$33,109	\$33,109
Under Bill	33,771	34,447	35,136	35,838	36,555	37,286
Change	662	1,338	2,027	2,729	3,446	4,177
Mount Vernon VFC						
Current Law	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555
Under Bill	42,387	43,234	44,099	44,981	45,881	46,798
Change	831	1,679	2,544	3,426	4,325	5,243
Tylerton VFC						
Current Law	\$10,417	\$10,417	\$10,417	\$10,417	\$10,417	\$10,417
Under Bill	10,625	10,838	11,055	11,276	11,501	11,731
Change	208	421	638	859	1,084	1,314
Fairmont VFC						
Current Law	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555	\$41,555
Under Bill	42,387	43,234	44,099	44,981	45,881	46,798
Change	831	1,679	2,544	3,426	4,325	5,243
Total Current Law	\$365,834	\$365,834	\$365,834	\$365,834	\$365,834	\$365,834
Total Under Bill	\$373,151	\$380,614	\$388,226	\$395,990	\$403,910	\$411,988
Total Change	\$7,317	\$14,780	\$22,392	\$30,156	\$38,076	\$46,154

VFC: Volunteer Fire Company

Source: Department of Legislative Services

Current Law: The Public Local Laws of Somerset County require the county commissioners to appropriate funds to organized volunteer fire companies in the county. Appropriations made by the county commissioners to volunteer fire companies were last changed by Chapters 327 and 328 of 2018, which increased funding for fiscal 2019 through 2024. The legislation also required that the fiscal 2024 funding levels remain the same for each year thereafter, unless changed by subsequent legislation.

Local Fiscal Effect: There are eight organized volunteer fire companies in Somerset County. The county commissioners have provided funding to volunteer fire companies for over 45 years. As shown in Exhibit 1, total county appropriations to volunteer fire companies will increase by \$7,317 in fiscal 2025 and by \$46,154 in fiscal 2030 and subsequent years. This represents a 2.0% annual increase in county funding for each volunteer fire company.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 829 (Senator Carozza) - Budget and Taxation.

Information Source(s): Somerset County; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 19, 2024
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