

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

The bill does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Firefighters who meet certain educational achievement criteria are eligible to receive supplemental compensation from his or her employer in addition to their normal compensation. A firefighter must meet one of the following criteria:

1. If a firefighter receives an associate degree from a college, which degree is applicable to fire department duties, the firefighter shall receive additional compensation.
2. If a firefighter, regardless of whether or not she or he earned an associate degree earlier, who receives from an accredited college or university a bachelor's degree, which bachelor's degree is applicable to fire department duties, the firefighter shall receive additional compensation.¹

The supplemental compensation a firefighter may receive is as follows:

- (a) Fifty dollars a month to a firefighter who earns an associate degree from a college and meets the qualifications regarding the applicability of that degree to their duties as a firefighter.
- (b) One hundred and ten dollars a month to a firefighter who earns a bachelor's degree and meets the qualifications regarding the applicability of that degree to their duties as a firefighter.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill adds a master's degree to the college degrees earned that may qualify a firefighter to receive supplemental compensation. The master's degree must be applicable to fire department duties. The bill provides supplemental compensation of three hundred dollars a month to a firefighter who earns a qualifying master's degree.

The bill also raises the supplemental compensation received for earning an associate degree from fifty dollars a month to one hundred twenty five dollars a month. Additionally, the bill raises the compensation for earning a bachelor's degree from one hundred ten dollars a month to two hundred dollars a month.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2007.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends subsections (2) and (3) of section 633.382, F.S., relating to how a firefighter may earn supplemental compensation for obtaining a master's degree and sets out the compensation that may be received for earning other levels of college degrees.

Section 2: Provides an effective date.

¹ Section 633.382(2)(a)1 & 2, F.S.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

Indeterminate.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The mandates provision appears to apply because this bill would require a local government to expend funds to pay for the supplemental firefighter compensation. However, it appears an exception applies because the Legislature has formally determined there is an important state interest and has established a dedicated funding source.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

No statement submitted.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

At its meeting on March 7, 2007, the Committee on Urban & Local Affairs adopted two amendments to the bill. Amendment 1 added a fire inspector as a person eligible for supplemental compensation should the fire inspector earn an AA, bachelor's degree, or master's degree. Amendment 2 requires that an AA earned for supplemental compensation be earned at an accredited college or university. Current law did not state that the AA had to be earned from a college or university that is accredited, although current law requires that the bachelor's degree be earned from a college or university that is accredited.