

HB 2266 -- VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

SPONSOR: Ross

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Workforce Standards and Development by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill allows volunteer fire protection associations to apply to the Division of Workers' Compensation for grants for the purpose of funding the workers' compensation insurance premiums for the association's volunteer firefighters.

Subject to appropriations, the division will disburse grants to each applying volunteer fire protection association according to the schedule specified in the bill. Grant money disbursed under this section must only be used for the purpose of paying for the workers' compensation insurance premiums for volunteer firefighters.

This bill is the same as SB 613 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is important for certain fire associations that are operated primarily by volunteers. Some of these associations are not able to afford workers' compensation insurance for these volunteers when they have low annual budgets. Because of this, some associations elect not to cover the volunteers, and no one can afford to pay for the medical care. Thus, the volunteers are not able to work at their regular jobs and tend to their families.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Ross and Greg Carrell, State Fire Marshall.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.