

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** SB648S1

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. **Patron:** Perry

3. **Committee:** Finance and Appropriations

4. **Title:** Virginia Firefighting Personnel and Equipment Grant Program.

5. **Summary:** Establishes the Virginia Firefighting Personnel and Equipment Grant Program (Program) for the purpose of providing grants to localities, on competitive basis, to increase the number of firefighters to help communities meet required standards and to ensure adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

The Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) would administer the Program and two types of grants shall be made from the Program. The first shall provide grants to localities to increase the number of firefighters. Such grants shall be made for up to three years and shall be used by localities for programs to (i) hire new, additional full-time firefighters; (ii) convert part-time or volunteer firefighters to full-time firefighters; or (iii) recruit and retain volunteer firefighters. The proposed bill set out the allocation of the grant and provides that the funds are not to supplant any funds currently provided by the locality or the Commonwealth. Authorized uses of grant funds include acquiring firefighting and emergency medical services vehicles and equipment and modifying facilities. For both grants, the funds shall not be used to supplant any funds currently provided by the Commonwealth or by the locality and shall be used to increase the total amount of funds available for the provision of firefighting or emergency medical services. The Department shall report annually, beginning November 1, 2025, to the Governor and the General Assembly information regarding a list of grants, the amount of each approved grant, information on the performance assessment system that the bill directs the Department to create, an evaluation of each grant based on such system, and any other criteria deemed relevant by the Department.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** See Item 8 below.

7. **Fiscal Impact Estimates:** Preliminary, see Item 8 below.

8. **Fiscal Implications:** The proposed legislation establishes a Grant Program for purposes of awarding grants to localities from such funds as may be available to increase the number of firefighters and to meet required standards and to ensure adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. The Program is to be administered by VDFP. To the extent the Program is funded and grants are awarded to localities, VDFP believes it would need one additional full-time position with a total compensation of \$117,106 annually (including salary and benefits) to manage the Program. Currently, VDFP has two positions that oversee five

existing grant programs. The agency anticipates that this additional grant program would create additional workload and would require additional resources.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Virginia Department of Fire Programs, local and regional fire companies.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: This substitute is identical to the introduced version of HB 1043.