

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DOA 5/7/2025

LRB Number	25-2625/1	Introduction Number	SB-0186	Estimate Type	Original
Description training completion awards for volunteer firefighters					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Senate Bill 186 (SB 186) would expand the Volunteer Firefighter Service Award Program administered by the Department of Administration (department) to create a "completion service award" in addition to the existing length-of-service award.

This award would be made to volunteer fire departments or volunteer fire companies as a one-time payment of \$250 to volunteer firefighters who have completed sixty (60) hours of training. For a fire department or company to be eligible for an award, the municipality in which they are organized must, by ordinance, provide payments that match the \$250 paid by the state. In total between the municipal and state award, the completion award would equal \$500. Additionally, if the fire department or company receives an award from the department in excess of awards made to their volunteer firefighters in the calendar year, the fire department or company must repay excess money to the department to be deposited in the general fund.

The proposed legislation would require the department to submit a report to the chief clerk of each house of the legislature by December 31 in the calendar year six years following the effective date of the legislation, and annually for two years thereafter, which includes: (1) the number of individuals who received the grant through the date of the report and (2) the number of those individuals who are still firefighters in the State of Wisconsin. This would require reconciling the records of payments made to persons during that period and a determination to be made of whether those same unique persons remain firefighters for those reporting periods. This would result in a significant increase in reporting complexity from what is required for the Service Award Program under current law.

The completion of service awards, like the length-of-service awards, would be paid out of the appropriation under s. 20.505 (4) (er), Wis. Stats., Service award program; state awards (numeric 41200). This is a sum-sufficient, general-purpose revenue (GPR) appropriation account. As such, there are no concerns with expenditure authority related to increased expenditure for assistance payments under the appropriation account.

The estimated annual cost of assistance payments for the completion service award is indeterminate as it is not possible at this time to ascertain the number of currently active or future volunteer firefighters that would complete the training and become eligible for the one-time award in any given fiscal year. Further, the Department is not able to estimate the extent excess awards would need to be deposited into the general fund that were not expended for the purpose provided.

The existing length-of-service award under the department's Division of Intergovernmental Relations' Service Award Program is primarily administered by external vendors, with the Division of Intergovernmental Relations as well as the department's Bureau of Financial Management staff handling the contract management, annual payments to the vendors for disbursement to individual accounts, and annual reporting.

The proposed completion service award would be directly administered by the department, and significant work would be required to perform its administration, oversight, financial management, auditing, and additional reporting requirements. The department anticipates significant resources would be needed to audit, and as necessary, to receive repayments from amounts collected and unspent by volunteer fire departments or volunteer fire companies.

The department anticipates that it would not be able to absorb this administrative workload under the Division of Intergovernmental Relations' current position and expenditure authority.

Although the workload associated with the Service Award Program with the proposed expansion may not in total be equivalent to a full-time equivalent position, there is at present no other position available in the Division of Intergovernmental Relations to perform these duties.

To support this workforce need, the department estimates that 1.00 FTE GPR in position authority and \$82,300 GPR annually in expenditure authority would be necessary for a program and policy analyst under s. 20.505 (4) (ec), Wis. Stats., Service award program; general program operations (numeric 41100).

The amount of \$82,300 GPR reflects an anticipated offset of current expenditure authority in the base budget of numeric 41100 (currently \$17,200 total: \$5,000 LTE salary, \$400 fringe benefits, and \$11,800 supplies and services) from the estimated annualized cost of the position (\$99,500 total: \$62,200 salary, \$24,300 fringe benefits, and \$13,000 personnel-variable supplies and services) based on the average hourly rate of filled program and policy analyst positions in the department.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Fiscal Estimate Worksheet - 2025 Session

Detailed Estimate of Annual Fiscal Effect

☒ Original ☐ Updated ☐ Corrected ☐ Supplemental

LRB Number 25-2625/1		Introduction Number SB-0186	
Description training completion awards for volunteer firefighters			
I. One-time Costs or Revenue Impacts for State and/or Local Government (do not include in annualized fiscal effect):			
II. Annualized Costs:		Annualized Fiscal Impact on funds from:	
		Increased Costs	Decreased Costs
A. State Costs by Category			
State Operations - Salaries and Fringes	\$81,100		\$
(FTE Position Changes)	(1.0 FTE)		
State Operations - Other Costs	1,200		
Local Assistance			
Aids to Individuals or Organizations			
TOTAL State Costs by Category	\$82,300		\$
B. State Costs by Source of Funds			
GPR	82,300		
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
III. State Revenues - Complete this only when proposal will increase or decrease state revenues (e.g., tax increase, decrease in license fee, etc.)			
	Increased Rev	Decreased Rev	
GPR Taxes	\$	\$	
GPR Earned			
FED			
PRO/PRS			
SEG/SEG-S			
TOTAL State Revenues	\$	\$	
NET ANNUALIZED FISCAL IMPACT			
	<u>State</u>	<u>Local</u>	
NET CHANGE IN COSTS	\$82,300	\$Indeterminate	
NET CHANGE IN REVENUE	\$	\$	
Agency/Prepared By		Authorized Signature	Date
DOA/ Robert Albrecht (608) 264-6343		Colleen Holtan (608) 266-1359	5/7/2025