

1 State of Arkansas  
2 90th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2015  
4

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1659

5 By: Representatives Hammer, Ratliff  
6

## For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE RURAL FIRE  
9 DEPARTMENTS STUDY COMMITTEE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
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### Subtitle

11 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE RURAL  
12 FIRE DEPARTMENTS STUDY COMMITTEE.  
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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
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19 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-272-101(b)(1), concerning the creation  
20 of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee, is amended to read as follows:

21 (b)(1) The following shall be nonvoting ex officio members of the  
22 ~~committee~~ Rural Fire Departments Study Committee:

23 (A) One (1) member representing the Arkansas Farm Bureau  
24 Federation, to be recommended by the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation and  
25 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

26 (B) One (1) member representing the Independent Insurance  
27 Agents of Arkansas, to be recommended by the Independent Insurance Agents of  
28 Arkansas and appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

29 (C) One (1) member representing the Arkansas County Judges  
30 Association, to be recommended by the Arkansas County Judges Association and  
31 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

32 (D) One (1) member representing the Arkansas Rural and  
33 Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, to be recommended by the Arkansas Rural  
34 and Volunteer Fire Fighters Association and appointed by the Speaker of the  
35 House of Representatives;

36 (E) One (1) member representing the Arkansas Council of



1 Professional Fire Fighters, to be recommended by the Arkansas Council of  
 2 Professional Fire Fighters and appointed by the Speaker of the House of  
 3 Representatives;

4 (F) One (1) member representing the Arkansas Municipal  
 5 League, to be recommended by the Arkansas Municipal League and appointed by  
 6 the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

7 (G) One (1) member appointed by the Speaker of the House  
 8 of Representatives to represent the Arkansas State Firefighters Association;

9 (H) The Director of the Arkansas Forestry Commission or ~~the~~  
 10 ~~director's~~ his or her designee;

11 (I) The Director of the Department of Rural Services or  
 12 ~~the director's~~ his or her designee; ~~and~~

13 (J) The Manager of the Rural Fire Protection Program of  
 14 the Arkansas Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils;

15 (K) The State Fire Marshal or his or her designee;

16 (L) The Insurance Commissioner or his or her designee;

17 (M) The State Fire Service Coordinator of the Arkansas  
 18 Department of Emergency Management or his or her designee;

19 (N) The President of the Arkansas Forestry Association or  
 20 his or her designee;

21 (O) The State Geographic Information Officer or his or her  
 22 designee;

23 (P) Two (2) firefighters representing volunteer fire  
 24 departments, to be recommended by the cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments  
 25 Study Committee and appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

26 (Q) Two (2) fire chiefs representing volunteer fire  
 27 departments, to be recommended by the cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments  
 28 Study Committee and appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

29 (R) One (1) member representing nonprofit fire  
 30 departments, to be recommended by the cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments  
 31 Study Committee and appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;  
 32 and

33 (S) Two (2) fire department consultants, to be recommended  
 34 by the cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee and appointed  
 35 by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

1 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 14-272-103, concerning studies and findings  
2 of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee, is amended to add an  
3 additional subsection to read as follows:

4 (c) The committee shall:

5 (1) Study, review, and analyze potential incentives and methods  
6 to recruit and retain volunteers for nonmunicipal fire departments;

7 (2) Study and review the number of nonmunicipal fire departments  
8 and any available resources in the state to determine the most efficient  
9 operation of nonmunicipal fire departments and evaluate if consolidation of  
10 fire departments or other measures are necessary to improve efficiency;

11 (3) Study and review all types of nonmunicipal fire departments,  
12 including without limitation countywide fire departments, and the potential  
13 conversion of the departments to fire protection districts;

14 (4) Study and develop a comprehensive plan to bring all  
15 nonmunicipal fire departments' Insurance Services Office, Inc.'s Public  
16 Protection Classification rating to Class 6 or less by January 1, 2024,  
17 including without limitation a review of:

18 (A) Numbers of volunteers for each nonmunicipal fire  
19 department;

20 (B) Number of nonmunicipal fire department locations;

21 (C) Equipment at each nonmunicipal fire department  
22 location; and

23 (D) Essential equipment necessary at each nonmunicipal  
24 fire department location;

25 (5) Study and review the financial solvency of nonmunicipal fire  
26 departments and analyze the impact of an increase in funding to the  
27 nonmunicipal fire departments;

28 (6) Study and review the role of nonmunicipal fire departments,  
29 including without limitation response to fires, nonstructural fires, medical  
30 assistance calls, rescues, and other emergency services; and

31 (7) Study and review other nonmunicipal fire department matters  
32 as deemed necessary by the committee.

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