

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

1 State of Arkansas *As Engrossed:* H3/12/15 H3/13/15 H3/17/15 H3/20/15

2 90th General Assembly

A Bill

3 Regular Session, 2015

HOUSE BILL 1659

4

5 By: Representatives Hammer, Ratliff

6 By: Senator A. Clark

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For An Act To Be Entitled

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AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE RURAL FIRE

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DEPARTMENTS STUDY COMMITTEE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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Subtitle

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TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE RURAL

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FIRE DEPARTMENTS STUDY COMMITTEE.

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18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-272-101(b)(1), concerning the creation
of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee, is amended to read as follows:

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(b)(1) The following shall be nonvoting ex officio members of the

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~~committee~~ Rural Fire Departments Study Committee:

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

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

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

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

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1 (E) One (1) member representing the Arkansas Council of
2 Professional Fire Fighters, to be recommended by the Arkansas Council of
3 Professional Fire Fighters and appointed by the Speaker of the House of
4 Representatives;

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

8 (G) One (1) member appointed by the Speaker of the House
9 of Representatives ~~to represent~~ be recommended by the Arkansas State
10 Firefighters Association;

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 (N) The President of the Arkansas Forestry Association or
22 his or her designee;

23 (O) The State Geographic Information Officer or his or her
24 designee;

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

28 (Q) Two (2) fire chiefs representing volunteer fire
29 departments, to be recommended by the Arkansas Association of Fire Chiefs and
30 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

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

34 (S) A fire department consultant, to be recommended by the
35 cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee and appointed by the
36 Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

1 (T) One (1) member representing the Insurance Services
2 Office, Inc., to be recommended by the cochairs of the Rural Fire Departments
3 Study Committee and appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
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5 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 14-272-103, concerning studies and findings
6 of the Rural Fire Departments Study Committee, is amended to add an
7 additional subsection to read as follows:

8 (c) The committee shall:

9 (1) Study, review, and analyze potential incentives and methods
10 to recruit and retain volunteers for fire departments;

11 (2) Study and review the number of fire departments and any
12 available resources in the state to determine the most efficient operation of
13 fire departments and evaluate if consolidation of fire departments or other
14 measures are necessary to improve efficiency;

15 (3) Study and review all types of fire departments, including
16 without limitation countywide fire departments, and the potential conversion
17 of the departments to fire protection districts;

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

22 (A) Numbers of volunteers for each fire department;

23 (B) Number of fire department locations;

24 (C) Equipment at each fire department location; and

25 (D) Essential equipment necessary at each fire department
26 location;

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

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

32 (7) Study and review the role of fire department consultants and
33 establish guidelines and qualifications for fire department consulting
34 services; and

35 (8) Study and review other fire department matters as deemed
36 necessary by the committee.

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/s/Hammer