

Calendar No. 567

117TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
117-214 }

FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT

—
R E P O R T

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

TO ACCOMPANY

S. 4882

TO AMEND THE FEDERAL FIRE PREVENTION AND
CONTROL ACT OF 1974 TO AUTHORIZE APPROPRIATIONS
FOR THE UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION AND
FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAMS



NOVEMBER 28, 2022.—Ordered to be printed

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FIRE GRANTS AND SAFETY ACT

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Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs, submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 4882]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 4882) to amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize appropriations for the United States Fire Administration and firefighter assistance grant programs, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

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I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

S. 4882, the *Fire Grants and Safety Act*, would reauthorize the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program, and the United States Fire Administration (USFA). The current authorization of appropriations for all three entities expires in 2023, and SAFER and AFG have a program sunset in 2024. The bill would extend all three authorizations until 2030 and impose a new sunset clause of 2032 for the SAFER and AFG programs. It also authorizes appropriations for USFA at \$95 million for the en-

tire time period, an increase from the current authorization of \$76.5 million. It does not change the SAFER and AFG authorization amounts, which was set at \$750 million each in 2013 and is adjusted for inflation every year.

II. BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Firefighters in the United States play a critical role in mitigating and responding to the persistent threat of fires that occur at our homes, businesses, across landscapes, and other locations in our communities. Fires remain a persistent threat across the country. In 2021, there were an estimated 1.35 million fires responded to by local fire departments in the United States.¹ These fires caused 3,800 civilian deaths and an estimated \$15.9 billion in property damage.² Fire stations across the country rely on SAFER, AFG, and the USFA for critical resources and information to protect both their communities and firefighting personnel.

Firefighting and the providing of fire protection services is generally the responsibility of local governments, with funding coming from a mix of state, county, and city resources.³ Due to state and local budget shortfalls in the 1990s, and increased responsibilities such as counterterrorism, fire community stakeholders called for additional funding from the federal government.⁴ The AFG program was authorized in the 106th Congress to provide federal funding for equipment and training directly to local fire departments.⁵ After the AFG program was created, stakeholders in the fire services community argued that there remained a critical need for a federal program to provide grants to help fire departments recruit and retain firefighters, and that without federal assistance local fire departments would be unable to meet national consensus standards for minimum staffing levels. In response, Congress passed the SAFER Act in the 108th Congress which authorized the SAFER grant program to help address fire department staffing needs.⁶ The USFA was created after a report from the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, entitled *America Burning*.⁷ The Commission recommended the creation of a federal fire agency which would provide support to state and local governments and private fire organizations in their efforts to reduce fire deaths, injuries, and property loss.⁸

The SAFER program provides grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to career, volunteer, and combination local fire departments for the purpose of increasing the number of firefighters to help communities meet industry-minimum standards and attain 24-hour staffing to provide adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.⁹ The AFG program

¹National Fire Protection Association, *Fire Loss in the United States During 2021* (Sept. 2022) (<https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/News%20and%20Research/Fire%20statistics%20and%20reports/US%20Fire%20Problem/osFireLoss.ashx>).

²*Id.*

³Congressional Research Service, *Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response: The SAFER Grant Program* (RL33375) (Apr. 25, 2019).

⁴*Id.*

⁵Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, Pub. L. No. 93–498, Sec. 33 (2019).

⁶Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, as amended, Pub. L. No. 93–498, Sec. 34. (2004).

⁷Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, Pub. L. No. 95–422.

⁸Congressional Research Service, *United States Fire Administration: An Overview* (RS20071) (Apr. 25, 2019).

⁹*Id.*

provides grants from FEMA to local fire departments and unaffiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations to help address a variety of equipment, training, and other firefighter-related and EMS needs.¹⁰ USFA’s mission is to provide leadership, coordination, and support for the nation’s fire prevention and control, fire training and education, and emergency medical services activities, and to prepare first responders and health care leaders to react to hazard and terrorism emergencies of all kinds.¹¹ One of USFA’s key objectives is to significantly reduce the nation’s loss of life from fire, while also achieving a reduction in property loss and nonfatal injury due to fire. They work to achieve this through data collection, research, trainings, and public education.

This legislation will ensure firefighters, EMS workers, and other stakeholders will continue to have access to critical grant funding and information to help keep themselves, and their communities, safe. This legislation would extend all three authorizations until 2030 and impose a new sunset clause of 2032 for the SAFER and AFG programs. Additionally, the bill increases the authorization of appropriation for the USFA from the current \$76.5 million to \$95 million.

III. LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 4882 was introduced on September 19, 2022 by Senators Peters (D–MI) and Portman (R–OH), and referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Senators Carper (D–DE) and Collins (R–ME) joined as cosponsors of the bill on September 28, 2022. The Committee considered this bill at a business meeting on September 28, 2022. During the meeting, Senator Scott offered an amendment that would strike the repeal of the AFG and SAFER sunsets and add a sunset in 2030 for both programs. Senator Peters offered a second-degree amendment to Scott’s amendment that made the sunset year 2032 instead of 2030.

The Committee adopted Scott Amendment 1, as amended by the Peters second-degree amendment, and reported the bill favorably by voice vote, as amended. The Senators present for the vote were Peters, Carper, Hassan, Sinema, Rosen, Padilla, Ossoff, Portman, Johnson, Lankford, Romney, Scott, and Hawley.

IV. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS OF THE BILL, AS REPORTED

Section 1. Short title

This section designates the name of the bill as the “Fire Grants and Safety Act.”

Section 2. Reauthorization of the United States Fire Administration

This section reauthorizes the authorization for appropriations of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) at \$95 million for fiscal years 2024 through 2030. This section states that \$3.42 million of the funds appropriated will be used to carry out technology development and standards development.

¹⁰Congressional Research Service, *Assistance to Firefighters Program: Distribution of Fire Grant Funding* (RL32341) (Apr. 25, 2019).

¹¹Federal Emergency Management Agency, *U.S. Fire Administration Fiscal Year 2021 Report to Congress* (Aug. 30, 2022).

Section 3. Reauthorization of assistance for Firefighters grants program and the Fire Prevention and Safety grants program

Subsection (a) changes the current sunset provision from 2024 to 2032 for the AFG program.

Subsection (b) extends the authorization of appropriations for the AFG program through fiscal year 2030.

Section 4. Reauthorization of Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant program

Subsection (a) changes the current sunset provision from 2024 to 2032 for the SAFER grant program.

Subsection (b) extends the authorization of appropriations for the SAFER grant program through fiscal year 2030.

V. EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

Pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has considered the regulatory impact of this bill and determined that the bill will have no regulatory impact within the meaning of the rules. The Committee agrees with the Congressional Budget Office's statement that the bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

VI. CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, November 9, 2022.

Hon. GARY C. PETERS,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed table summarizing estimated budgetary effects and mandates information for some of the legislation that has been ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs during the 117th Congress.

If you wish further details, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact for each estimate is listed on the enclosed table.

Sincerely,

PHILLIP L. SWAGEL,
Director.

Enclosure.

SUMMARY ESTIMATES OF LEGISLATION ORDERED REPORTED

The Congressional Budget Act of 1974 requires the Congressional Budget Office, to the extent practicable, to prepare estimates of the budgetary effects of legislation ordered reported by Congressional authorizing committees. In order to provide the Congress with as much information as possible, the attached table summarizes information about the estimated direct spending and revenue effects of some of the legislation that has been ordered reported by the Sen-

ate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs during the 117th Congress. The legislation listed in this table generally would have small effects, if any, on direct spending or revenues, CBO estimates. Where possible, the table also provides information about the legislation's estimated effects on spending subject to appropriation and on intergovernmental and private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

LEGISLATION ORDERED REPORTED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS ESTIMATED BUDGETARY EFFECTS AND MANDATES INFORMATION

Bill Number	Title	Status	Last Action	Budget Function	Direct Spending, 2023-2032	Revenues, 2023-2032	Spending Subject to 2023-2027	Pay-As-You-Go Provisions Apply?	Increase On-Budget Deficits Beginning in 2033?	Mandates	Contact
S. 4882	Fire Grants and Safety Act	Ordered reported	09/28/22	450	0	0	Not estimated	No	No	No	Jon Sperl

S. 4882 would reauthorize appropriations for the operation of the U.S. Fire Administration and two grant programs administered by the agency that provide assistance to state, local, and tribal fire departments. Those programs provide assistance for hiring and training firefighters and first responders as well as for training and for procuring equipment and vehicles. CBO estimates that enacting S. 4882 would not affect direct spending or revenues. CBO has not estimated the discretionary costs of implementing the bill. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

VII. CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows: (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in brackets, new matter is printed in italic, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

**FEDERAL FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL ACT OF
1974**

* * * * *

SEC. 17. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) * * *

* * * * *

(g)(1) Except as otherwise specifically provided with respect to the payment of claims under section 11 of this Act, there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the purposes of this Act—

(A) \$63,000,000 for fiscal year 2005, of which \$2,266,000 shall be used to carry out section 8(f);

(L) \$76,490,890 for fiscal year 2016, of which \$2,753,672 shall be used to carry out section 8(f); **[and]**

(M) \$76,490,890 for each of fiscal years 2017 through 2023, of which \$2,753,672 for each such fiscal year shall be used to carry out section 8(f)**[.]**; *and*

(N) *\$95,000,000 for each fiscal years 2024 through 2030, of which \$3,420,000 for each such fiscal year shall be used to carry out section 8(f).*

SEC. 33. FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE.

(q) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

(A) * * *

(B) for each of fiscal years 2014 through **[2023]** 2030, an amount equal to the amount authorized for the previous fiscal year increased by the percentage by which—

(i) * * *

(ii) * * *

(2) * * *

(3) * * *

(r) SUNSET OF AUTHORITIES.—The authority to award assistance and grants under this section shall expire on September 30, **[2024]** 2032.

SEC. 34. STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE.

(j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated for the purposes of carrying out this section—

(I) for each of fiscal years 2014 through **[2023]** 2030, an amount equal to the amount authorized for the previous fiscal year increased by the percentage by which—

(i) * * *

(ii) * * *

(2) * * *

(3) * * *

(k) SUNSET OF AUTHORITIES.—The authority to award assistance and grants under this section shall expire on September 30, ~~2024~~ 2032.

* * * * *

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