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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 635 Session of  
2013

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INTRODUCED BY DAVIS, D. COSTA, SANTARSIERO, DUNBAR, BIZZARRO,  
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MATZIE, YOUNGBLOOD, READSHAW, GILLEN, DELUCA, GIBBONS AND  
NEILSON, FEBRUARY 8, 2013

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS, FEBRUARY 8, 2013

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, further providing for assistance to  
3 volunteer fire companies, ambulance service and rescue  
4 squads.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Section 7364(a) of Title 35 of the Pennsylvania  
8 Consolidated Statutes is amended to read:

9 § 7364. Assistance to volunteer fire companies, ambulance  
10 service and rescue squads.

11 (a) General rule.--The agency is authorized, upon  
12 application of any volunteer fire company, volunteer ambulance  
13 service or volunteer rescue squad, to make loans for the  
14 following purposes:

15 (1) Establishing or modernizing facilities that house  
16 firefighting equipment, ambulance or rescue vehicles. The

1 amount of a loan for establishing or modernizing facilities  
2 made to any one volunteer fire company, ambulance service or  
3 rescue squad shall not exceed 50% of the total cost of the  
4 facilities or modernization or [\$200,000] \$500,000, whichever  
5 is less, and a notarized financial statement filed under  
6 subsection (c) shall show that the applicant has available  
7 20% of the total cost of the facilities in unobligated funds.  
8 Proceeds of the loan shall be used only for purposes of  
9 structure or land acquisition or renovation or construction  
10 and shall not be used for payment of fees for design,  
11 planning, preparation of applications or any other cost not  
12 directly attributable to structure or land acquisition or  
13 renovation or construction.

14 (2) Purchasing firefighting apparatus, ambulances or  
15 rescue vehicles. The amount of a loan made for purchasing  
16 firefighting apparatus to any one volunteer fire company  
17 shall not exceed [\$100,000] \$500,000 for any single  
18 firefighting apparatus equipment or utility or special  
19 service vehicle or heavy duty rescue vehicle as defined by  
20 regulation, or 50% of the total cost of the equipment or  
21 vehicle, whichever is less, except for loans for aerial  
22 apparatus as defined by regulation, which shall not exceed  
23 \$150,000. The amount of a loan made to any one volunteer fire  
24 company, ambulance service or rescue squad for any ambulance  
25 or light duty rescue vehicle as defined by regulation shall  
26 not exceed \$50,000 and for a watercraft rescue vehicle shall  
27 not exceed \$15,000 or 50% of the cost of the ambulance or  
28 rescue vehicle, whichever is less, and a notarized financial  
29 statement filed under subsection (c) shall show that the  
30 applicant has available 20% of the total cost of the vehicle

1 in unobligated funds.

2 (3) Purchasing protective, accessory or communication  
3 equipment. No volunteer fire company, ambulance service or  
4 rescue squad shall receive a loan for protective, accessory  
5 or communicative equipment more than once in any five-year  
6 period. Each volunteer fire company, ambulance service or  
7 rescue squad may apply for a loan for a mobile and portable  
8 radio unit for each existing serviceable apparatus equipment,  
9 ambulance or rescue vehicle. Radio equipment obtained through  
10 loans under this subchapter shall be equipped with a  
11 frequency or frequencies licensed by the Federal  
12 Communications Commission for firefighting or emergency  
13 response purposes. A notarized financial statement shall be  
14 filed and loans under this subchapter for the purchase of  
15 protective, accessory or communicative equipment shall not  
16 exceed \$10,000.

17 (4) Refinancing debt incurred or contracts entered into  
18 after November 4, 1975, and used for the purchase of  
19 apparatus equipment or for the construction or modernization  
20 of facilities or for modification of apparatus equipment in  
21 order to comply with National Fire Protection Association  
22 standards.

23 (5) Repair or rehabilitation of apparatus equipment.  
24 Where it has been determined that existing apparatus  
25 equipment no longer meets the standards of the National Fire  
26 Protection Association and the repair or rehabilitation of  
27 such equipment will bring it in compliance with National Fire  
28 Protection Association standards, loans for the repair or  
29 rehabilitation for a single apparatus equipment shall be for  
30 at least \$1,000 but shall not exceed the lesser of \$35,000 or

80% of the total cost of repair or rehabilitation.

(6) Purchasing of used firefighting apparatus, equipment, used ambulances, used rescue vehicles, used communications equipment, used accessory equipment or used protective equipment, except that the used vehicles and equipment shall meet the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and loans for the purchase of a used single apparatus equipment shall not exceed [\$60,000] \$500,000 or 80% of the total cost of the equipment, whichever is less.

(7) Purchasing Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting System (PennFIRS) hardware and software. A volunteer fire company shall be eligible to apply one time only for a loan of not more than \$2,000 or 75% of the cost of such acquisition, whichever is less, and with a term not exceeding five years for the purpose of acquiring the hardware and software necessary to participate in the Pennsylvania Fire Information Reporting System. The Office of the State Fire Commissioner shall develop, at its discretion, such procedures and forms as it may deem necessary to facilitate loans for PennFIRS hardware and software. The loans shall be secured as required by law.

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Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.