

Pennsylvania Firefighters and EMS In Support for Senate Resolution 60

In 2004 Senate Resolution 60 was passed to create a bi-partisan Commission to

...establish a special bipartisan legislative commission to develop legislation to provide direct and indirect assistance for the purpose of improving the delivery of emergency services in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

This process identified 23 problems and made suggestions to better manage these problems. The time has now arrived for the grass roots fire and EMS personnel to locally support these programs to your elected officials in order to gain consensus and movement on these issues. The state leadership fire and EMS organizations have worked with Pennsylvania State Legislators to select the first set of legislative initiatives to work on.

While we understand you may not benefit from all of these initiatives, there is something that will benefit everyone, and over time all of the initiatives will be addressed. To get each of your initiatives addressed, we have to approach this as a group, as bills arise.

All of the statewide Fire and EMS associations in Pennsylvania and the Statewide Advisory Board of PFESI (Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute) have voted unanimously to support the initiatives of SR 60. The legislation enumerated in the following documents serves as a first step in our quest for passage of legislation directly related to the enhanced funding, recruitment and retention, administration, and operation of our fire and EMS system.

This packet of information is intended for **YOU TO TAKE ACTION**. Legislators have told SR 60 Commission members they never hear from fire and EMS personnel of their problems and needs – here is your chance!

The packet includes a petition, sample email and letter formats, talking points and an action calendar for your use to sell the needs of today's fire and EMS system.

NEVER BEFORE HAS THERE BEEN A CLEARER NEED FOR LOCAL ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF FIRE AND EMS PERSONNEL WITH THEIR LOCAL AND STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS. IT IS IN YOUR OWN BEST INTEREST TO TAKE THE TIME TO MAKE THE CONTACTS AND TELL YOUR STORY. IT IS A GREAT HUMAN INTEREST STORY THAT BENEFITS EVERY RESIDENT, WORKER AND VISITOR TO PENNSYLVANIA. PLEAD YOUR NEEDS TO YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS.

Finally, a video/DVD regarding SR 60 is available from PFESI for presentation to groups. For more information on the video/DVD, contact PFESI.

Questions should be referred to the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute at 1-800-FIRELINE or pfesi@verizon.net.

PETITION

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE, OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA:

We, the undersigned, have signed this document to support the defined initiatives to improve the Fire and Emergency Medical Services delivery system in Pennsylvania, consistent with the recommendations of Senate Resolution 60 -2004. Specifically, we, the undersigned ask local elected officials to encourage members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Pennsylvania Senate to support and pass legislation which is designed to sustain an infrastructure of safety within the Commonwealth.

Specifically we ask for support on the following legislative initiatives which directly relate to recommendations of SR 60:

HB 172

Supports the establishment and funding of a Municipal Firefighter Education and Training Program

HB 599

Provides for the amending of the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Act, further providing for the award of grants, for expenses incurred by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and providing for allocation of appropriated funds

SB 867

Makes an appropriation to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency for the purpose of funding grants, under the Act known as the Volunteer Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Act.

HB 105

Requires by law that Fire and EMS providers be able to purchase under state contracts and pricing, equipment/supplies/apparatus needed to perform their jobs.

SB 210

Amends the act known as the Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purpose Act, further providing for audit of certain financial reports (raising the threshold before audits are required).

SB 976

An Act establishing a tuition credit program for certain members of volunteer fire companies, volunteer ambulance service and volunteer rescue squads and their dependent children and spouses, and providing for the powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Higher Education Agency.

SR-60 ACTION CALENDAR

Actions you need to take

January ____

Send email, write letter, meet with your local elected official regarding SR 60

January ____

Send email, write letter, meet with your state representative regarding SR 60

January ____

Send email, write letter, meet with your state senator regarding SR 60

January ____

Circulate a petition among all members of your organization, their family and friends to gain support for SR 60. Mail a copy of the petition to your state representative, state senator and copy your local elected officials. Please also forward a copy to PFESI, 223 State Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

February ____

Follow up with your local elected official to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them.

February ____

Follow up with your state representative to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask what they have done to move the legislation. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them. Indicate to them you expect their support of this initiative.

February ____

Follow up with your state senator to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask what they have done to move the legislation. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them. Indicate to them you expect their support of this initiative.

March ____

Again, follow up with your local elected official to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them.

March ____

Again, follow up with your state representative to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask what they have done to move the legislation. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them. Indicate to them you expect their support of this initiative. Remind them that primary elections are forthcoming and you expect their attention to these matters.

March ____

Again follow up with your state senator to determine if they received and understand the information regarding SR 60. Ask what they have done to move the legislation. Ask if they need additional information, and if so provide it to them. Indicate to them you expect their support of this initiative. Remind them that primary elections are forthcoming and you expect their attention to these matters.

Look for special initiatives to be published in Pennsylvania Fireman, or your association websites. You can also sign up for the email distribution list for PFESI by going to their website, www.pfesi.org and entering your email address in the white box on the home page.

SAMPLE EMAIL OR LETTER TO LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL

TO: _____ **Local Elected Official**

In February of 2005, a press conference was held releasing the report of the Pennsylvania Senate Resolution 60 Commission of 2004. The Commission was charged with evaluating the fire and Emergency Medical service system in Pennsylvania and making recommendations for legislative action to improve the system. Twenty three recommendations were made addressing policy, financing, recruitment and retention, administrative, and service delivery. The report and recommendations were unanimously supported by the various fire and EMS agencies in Pennsylvania. The recommendations were also approved by local government associations serving on the SR 60 Commission.

Currently there are several pieces of legislation that are moving through the Pennsylvania House and Senate, which directly address issues raised in Senate Resolution 60 Commission report. This email (letter) asks for your personal involvement to contact our state representative and state senator to advance this legislation in the interest of sustaining a viable fire and emergency medical service capability in our community and across Pennsylvania.

Specifically we ask for support on the following legislative initiatives that directly relate to recommendations of SR 60:

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HB 2313

Reform of responsibility for Fire and EMS in First Class Townships

HB 2314

Reform of responsibility for Fire and EMS in Second Class Townships

HB 2312

Reform of responsibility for Fire and EMS in Boroughs

We recognize these are currently in discussion and urge your quick action for implementation.

In addition, we seek your immediate action to introduce and pass legislation that will help recruit and retain volunteer fire and EMS providers across all age groups with such legislation as

education tuition reimbursement,

tax credits, and

authorization for funding for length of service award systems.

Finally, your immediate action to address organizational funding by authorizing user fees for such acts as incidents on highways will greatly enable improved performance on the part of emergency responders.

As the report completed by the Senate Resolution 60 Commission vividly illustrated, the important infrastructure services of fire and emergency medical services are in crisis in Pennsylvania and need your immediate involvement and action as legislators to solidify funding streams, support recruitment and retention of the personnel in this system, relieve unnecessary administrative burdens, and better define responsibilities in changing times.

Emergency Responders not only provides services the people of Pennsylvania rely upon daily, but saves taxpayers in excess of \$6 billion annually. We therefore ask for YOUR personal attention to this necessary investment in YOUR community.

Yours in fire and life safety:

SAMPLE EMAIL OR LETTER TO ELECTED STATE OFFICIAL

TO: _____ **State Representative or State Senator**

As you will recall, in February of 2005, a press conference was held releasing the report of the Pennsylvania Senate Resolution 60 Commission of 2004. The Commission was charged with evaluating the fire and Emergency Medical service system in Pennsylvania and making recommendations for legislative action to improve the system. Twenty three recommendations were made addressing policy, financing, recruitment and retention, administrative, and service delivery. The report and recommendations were unanimously supported by the various fire and EMS agencies in Pennsylvania. The recommendations were also approved by local government associations serving on the SR 60 Commission.

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Yours in fire and life safety:

PHONE CALL TO/MEETING WITH LEGISLATOR

**Once you make the appointment, it is important to be prepared for the meeting.
Use the following key points to “make your case” with your legislator.**

KEY POINTS

In February of 2005, a press conference was held releasing the report of the Pennsylvania Senate Resolution 60 Commission of 2004.

The Commission was charged with evaluating the fire and Emergency Medical service system in Pennsylvania and making recommendations for legislative action to improve the system.

Twenty three recommendations were made addressing policy, financing, recruitment and retention, administrative, and service delivery.

The report and recommendations were unanimously supported by the various fire and EMS agencies in Pennsylvania.

Our organization and I ask for your personal involvement to advance this legislation in the interest of sustaining a viable fire and emergency medical service capability in Pennsylvania.

Currently there are several pieces of legislation which are moving through the Pennsylvania House and Senate, which directly address issues raised in Senate Resolution 60 Commission report. This ____ (meeting, email, letter) asks for your personal involvement to expedite and advance this legislation in the interest of sustaining a viable fire and emergency medical service capability in Pennsylvania, which will assure a solid infrastructure of safety within the Commonwealth.

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MEETING WITH YOUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL

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List of Legislators/addresses