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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 4121

02/22/2024 Authored by Huot, Myers and Robbins
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State and Local Government Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to local government; establishing a fire service consolidation working
1.3 group; requiring a report; appropriating money.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. FIRE SERVICE CONSOLIDATION WORKING GROUP.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Creation. The fire service consolidation working group consists of the
1.7 following members, who shall represent rural, suburban, and metropolitan areas of the state:

1.8 (1) the state fire marshal or the marshal's designee;

1.9 (2) up to three members of the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association, including
1.10 association members who have actively pursued the establishment of fire districts or other
1.11 forms of fire and emergency service consolidation;

1.12 (3) up to four local government elected officials who have a history and an interest in
1.13 evaluating the future delivery of fire and other emergency services appointed by the state
1.14 fire marshal, representing different sectors of the state;

1.15 (4) up to three active firefighters who have an interest in evaluating the future delivery
1.16 of fire and other emergency services appointed by the state fire marshal, representing
1.17 different sectors of the state;

1.18 (5) one representative from the League of Minnesota Cities who is familiar with fire
1.19 service organization and finances;

1.20 (6) one representative from the Minnesota Association of Townships who is familiar
1.21 with fire service organization and finances;

2.1 (7) one city administrator or manager and one county administrator or coordinator who  
 2.2 have an interest in evaluating the future delivery of fire and other emergency services  
 2.3 appointed by the state fire marshal;

2.4 (8) a member of the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor familiar with fire service  
 2.5 organizations, finances, and pensions and the executive director of the Minnesota Legislative  
 2.6 Commission on Pensions and Retirement; and

2.7 (9) at least three members of the public who have been involved or are interested in fire  
 2.8 department consolidation appointed by the state fire marshal.

2.9 Subd. 2. **Duties.** The working group must identify strategies, make recommendations,  
 2.10 and explore the merits of, and state and local incentives for, the voluntary consolidation of  
 2.11 fire departments or the creation of regional fire departments, fire districts, or other models  
 2.12 for collaborative and efficient delivery of fire and emergency services in the state. The  
 2.13 working group must also review the legislative process and pension regulations and make  
 2.14 recommendations to streamline future consolidations and explore infrastructure funding  
 2.15 options for combined or regional fire departments, fire districts, or other models for  
 2.16 collaborative and efficient delivery of fire and emergency services in the state. The working  
 2.17 group must provide a report by February 1, 2025, to the chairs and ranking minority members  
 2.18 of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over local government, public safety, and  
 2.19 bonding.

2.20 Subd. 3. **Administrative process and administrative support.** (a) The state fire marshal  
 2.21 or the marshal's designee must convene the initial meeting of the working group by .....  
 2.22 The members of the working group must elect a chair from the working group members.

2.23 (b) Members of the working group shall serve with compensation.

2.24 (c) The task force may hire part-time administrative support for the task force.

2.25 (d) The working group is subject to the Open Meeting Law under Minnesota Statutes,  
 2.26 chapter 13D.

2.27 (e) The working group expires upon submission of the report required under subdivision  
 2.28 2.

2.29 Subd. 4. **Deadline for appointments or designations.** The appointments and designations  
 2.30 authorized by this section must be completed by August 1, 2024.

2.31 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

2.32 \$...... in fiscal year 2025 is appropriated for purposes of section 1.