

10/10/08

Governor Paterson has struck down a second bill which would have benefited fire & EMS volunteers. This bill would have increased the number of Volunteer Recruitment Scholarships given out. One of the reasons FASNY was promoting this bill was because many years not all of the funds allocated for this scholarship have been used. By allowing fire companies to submit the names of up to three members, more of the money allocated for this scholarship would have been given out.

The first bill vetoed by Gov. Paterson would have given fire & EMS volunteers a 10% property tax credit IN ADDITION to their \$200 state income tax credit.

If you would like to contact the Governor,
you can e-mail him at <http://161.11.121.121/govemail>

Sent: Thursday, October 09, 2008 4:29 AM
Subject: Veto

Please forward :

VETO MESSAGE:

VETO MESSAGE - No. 156

TO THE SENATE:

I am returning herewith, without my approval, the following bill:

Senate Bill Number 3673, entitled:

"AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to volunteer recruitment service scholarships"

NOT APPROVED

New York State offers scholarships to volunteer fire and volunteer ambulance companies to use as a recruitment and retention incentive for new members. Volunteer firefighter and ambulance corps across the State may annually submit one application to the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) for the Volunteer Recruitment Service Scholarship (VRSS).

The VRSS program is open to volunteer firefighters and ambulance personnel who: (1) have been New York State residents for at least one year; (2) are enrolled in an approved undergraduate degree program in the State; (3) have a course load of at least six credits per term; (4) if 23 years of age or older, have less than six months of volunteer service at time of initial award; (5) are not in possession of a baccalaureate degree or higher; and (6) are attending a college/institution within 50 miles of the volunteer organization or if no college is available within the 50-mile limit, the nearest college/institution.

This bill would allow volunteer organizations to increase from one to three the number of applications that they can submit annually to HESC for the VRSS. If funds remain available, then

HESC may award additional scholarships to eligible organizations.

Proponents of the bill argue the legislation would provide access to more volunteers who volunteer and are eligible. They suggest that rather than have a leftover surplus of scholarship funds each year, multiple candidates from a single company could use any remaining scholarship funds. They argue that any fiscal impact is minimal as presently not all the funds are being used.

This bill could require up to \$2 million of additional funding each year by increasing the number of applicants that may be submitted. Bills with an impact on the State's finances should only be considered as part of the budget process, which involves a comprehensive review and analysis of all proposed future revenues and expenditures.

The bill is disapproved.

(signed) DAVID A. PATERSON