

Insurance and Real Estate Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6973

AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS FOR MEMBERS OF
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE

Title: SERVICES.

Vote Date: 3/13/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/27/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Insurance and Real Estate Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

House Bill No. 6973 was introduced by the Insurance and Real Estate Committee to allow volunteer fire department or volunteer ambulance service members to negotiate their health insurance premiums with their respective town, city, or borough.

The legislature has recognized the decline in volunteer firefighters throughout the state of Connecticut, with an all-time low recorded in 2020, while simultaneously, calls to firefighters and EMS have been increasing in frequency. In allowing for health insurance premium negotiations between municipalities and their volunteer service members, the legislature hopes that this bill will help alleviate the financial burdens on both active service members those that potentially hesitate to sign up to volunteer with their local fire or EMS service due to costs.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

[Michael Quinn, Dist. 82, State Representative, Connecticut General Assembly](#)
[Ben McGorty, Dist. 122, State Representative, Connecticut General Assembly](#)

As Co-Chairs of the Fire and EMS Caucus, Representatives Michael Quinn and Ben McGorty testified in support of HB 6973. They believe that this bill creates an avenue for volunteer firefighters and EMS employees to receive the same benefits that municipal employees do. They continue, stating that the negotiation opportunities presented in this bill will help both affirm the important work of volunteer firefighter and EMS workers, as well as lessen their financial burden.

[John Carew, Legislative Consultant, Connecticut State Firefighter Association](#) submitted testimony in support of this bill. He believes that this bill would encourage more people to volunteer for these services and will ease their financial burden to help sustain their important work.

[Michael Thurz, Glastonbury Fire Chief, Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association](#) supports HB 6973. In his written testimony, he cites statistics regarding declining firefighter numbers, and claims that this legislation will assist firehouses across the state in both recruitment and retention.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed.

Reported by: Michael Flynn

Date: 03/20/2025