

**2013 SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

**SB 2327**

# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee  
Red River Room, State Capitol

SB 2327  
February 7, 2013  
18477

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A Bill for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of emergency services for fire training

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

**Chairman Andrist** opened the hearing for SB 2327. All senators were in attendance.

**Senator Kilzer** District 54 introduced this bill at the request of a colleague. The volunteer firefighters are expected to produce more and more, to give more and more. As far as training goes, to this point, we have given them nothing. So if we give them a little, there will be lots to be accomplished. The fiscal note or price tag is \$125,000 which will get a good start and give encouragement to people who are ready and well trained and can serve us at a moment's notice. I ask your favorable consideration of this part of the emergency services, which we're expecting more and more of, and their having more and more difficulty getting the training and that is what this is aimed at.

**Senator John Grabinger** asked Senator Kilzer where the money is actually going to be used? As a former volunteer firefighter, I know we had our training sessions in one town and I am wondering what this money is actually utilized for other than just saying it's for training? Is it for rotating around the state program or trained officials? **Senator Kilzer** replied that he will defer that question to subsequent speakers. But I've been reassured that it's really not all the money they would be needing but it will incentivize more in training.

**C. J. Craven**, Fire chief from the City of Minot, and the President of the North Dakota Fire Chiefs Association. I agree with everything that Senator Kilzer said about the need for training, but we oppose this bill because there is a certified training organization in the state of North Dakota under the Century Code; which is the North Dakota Fire Fighters Association. We believe this bill is narrowly written in order to award the grant to other parties other than the NDFFA.

**Chairman Andrist** Does that utilize both the volunteer departments and the professional ones? **C.J. Craven** replied that is correct.

**Greg Wilz**, Deputy Director for the Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES) and also serve as the Director for Homeland Security. See written testimony #1.

**Chairman Andrist** Do you think that the present program is for training programs for fire training? In order for an organization or any other state funding for training, would you say that you don't see any organizations not getting funding for training?

**Greg Wilz** replied I believe that as narrowly as this bill is written, it precludes the premier training organization within the state and the ability to compete for the same funds. Essentially what we're doing here is establishing yet another process, another service when clearly the one that has been working for many years, whether they have enough funding or not I can't talk to that, but have demonstrated their ability to provide for the needs of firemen in North Dakota.

**Senator Judy Lee** There has been a bit of a spitting match I think between perhaps a smaller group would be an appropriate way to say it; and the long standing firefighters association. The offset group is the one who would benefit from this particular bill if I understand it correctly? Is there a need for additional dollars to be put into training, we might most appropriately look at adding it to the bill that is included probably in your budget., that would have training for firefighters? Is that pretty close to what is going on?

**Greg Wilz** replied I don't know whether that captures it all. It perhaps is part, but clearly I think should you decide to approve our grant you just need to open up the competition for it and not so narrowly define it within in the bill. It would be our goal to get the very best that we can to get to train our firefighters. As the bill is written I think it does not really afford us maybe the opportunity to look at everybody who would have a solid interest in that training.

**Chairman Andrist** Greg is there groups who aren't getting any state funding for training? Do you believe that to be true? **Greg Wilz** replied yes I guess I do. I believe that to be true. I don't know who those groups are or how many there are, but at the end of the day, there had been a lot of opportunities in the last number of years to qualify for federal programs and perhaps state programs and I would think that those folks that are literally in the business and performing well in the business have had opportunities, whether they have seized them or not I am not too sure.

**Chairman Andrist** I would also ask for clarification, do you have funding for training programs run through your agency? **Greg Wilz** replied we do and most cases if not all. They are tied to federal funds and grant funds that we receive and we have provided a lot of money in the last couple of years in specially to areas: one is equipment and the other is training and with a specific target for hazardous material response training. There are a number of other grants out there that fire departments and firefighters can apply for directly from the Federal government and that would be my level of knowledge.

**Senator Jim Dotzenrod** Firefighter training has been going on for a long time in North Dakota. I am curious how we've been doing that, has there been a state appropriation that is part of your budget or part of someone else's budget? Is there state funds involved? Do firefighters come in for training once a year or like EMT's and other certain minimum training that they have to do in a period of time? It seems like we're talking about \$125,000

but there must've been more money involved and more people involved over a long period of time to get us to where we are today to have firefighters trained all over the state. Can you tell me a little bit about how we have functioned to get that done? Is there an appropriation for this?

**Greg Wilz** replied I guess I could talk about it, but the experts are sitting right here behind and I would that the North Dakota Firefighters Association maybe address that.

**Robert Knuth** Training Director for the North Dakota Firefighters Association. (History of the North Dakota Firefighters Association 13:00- 15:22) One of the other questions was concerning required training. There is no mandated training in the state of North Dakota for firefighters it's all voluntary. We do offer a certification program as well to become a state certified Firefighter I, Firefighter II. We are in the process now of becoming pro-board accredited which is national accreditation and the Fargo Fire Department is currently accredited with pro-board. NDFA is going through the application process now so we will as well be able to offer that accreditation or certification to all members of the North Dakota Firefighters Association.

**Chairman Andrist** Is firefighters association publically funded? **Robert Knuth** replied no, we do get appropriated funds. I am the training director so I focus on specific developing of training, scheduling of training and actually providing the training. I can tell you the appropriations that we do receive are expended throughout the year and we receive several grants as well. We use those grants to provide specific training such as our emergency vehicle operations course, to teach young firefighters how to absolutely drive a apparatus to and from an accident. We also have hazmat awareness which Mr. Wilz indicated earlier. We receive funding from them to put on all the hazard materials awareness and operations training for all the firefighters. We have a program called Courage to be Safe that is funded by the WSI that program is a requirement for our certification program. All of these are free of charge to our individual firefighters and our departments.

**Renee Loh:** Executive Director of the North Dakota Firefighters. Some of your questions have been, do we receive an appropriation? Yes, we receive \$420,000 a year, through an appropriation, through the state of North Dakota. We spend that money very diligently on training. (Handed out brochure for committee to look at). One of the things we were able to do for the firefighters this year is to get a grant for them to pay their registration fee to State Fire School. I very much need toward getting grants for the firefighters because there's so much training that is needed, so I go out to some of our private corporate businesses in the state of North Dakota. (Example cited 20:18- 20:43) All of this money is needed to train the firefighters because they do need that training so they remain safe. As we know just with the infrastructure in North Dakota right now, with all of the chemicals and other products that are being trucked and railed and transported through our state. These firefighters when they go out to an incident must know how to stay safe. In the last few years we have just developed an oil field emergency class.

**Senator John Grabinger** The group that is really pursuing this funding, do they offer any training beyond what the firefighters association does or are they staying in line with what you guys are doing? **Renee Loh** replied I don't know anything about this other training

group, however, just a concern on behalf of our firefighters. This is really why we're here today. I really would not have any idea of what training they can offer.

**Senator Judy Lee** For clarification, that \$420,000 is that per year or per biennium? **Renee Loh** replied it is per year. Actually, I do want you to know that usually every year we spend \$726,000, so if I didn't go after those grants and everything. States such as Wyoming they actually have a training budget for their firefighters of \$1.7 million dollars. So I am very proud. The Department of Emergency Services has been a strong partner for us and through them we have been able to do the hazardous material training, the awareness and the operations level. So many of the firefighters were having difficulty if they wanted to take the operations level they were looking at 24 hours, so we actually worked with PAWS Training Service and they developed a curriculum that would reduce it down to 8 hours, so we could get more of the firefighters through that.

**Senator Jim Dotzenrod** This appropriation, this \$420,000, is that appropriation contained in an agency budget and the budget makes grants to you or is it in Mr. Wilz department or how is that appropriated? Who gets that? **Renee Loh** replied it goes through the insurance department budget and its allocated there and then in September of each year they write us a check and they send that to us. We put it in our savings account and as we progress through the year then we utilize that. With the donations we actually received, we just bought an Emergency Vehicle Operations Simulator, four miniature cameras on the fire truck to show them what is wrong. **Senator Jim Dotzenrod** I have to admit I am a little confused because we have a hearing on a bill and want to give \$125,000 to some different collection of people and their not here and doesn't appear to be here to explain much about their position. This was in competition and appears with your group and its' as far as I can tell the training that you provide is available to anyone who really is qualified and needs the training to get it. So, there is something going on here I am missing. I guess I don't understand this. It's kind of odd to have a bill which is to benefit a certain group of people and they are not here. We don't know anything about them. It is a little unusual.

**Renee Loh** replied I don't anything either but we felt that we needed to come.

**Chairman Andrist** asked the spectators if anyone could come up and answer Senator Dotzenrod's question. Where the bill came from?

**Senator John Grabinger** I received an email regarding this. There is a group who apparently feels they want to offer training and want to essentially compete with our firefighters association and they don't have the funding to do so. They are getting state funding to provide that; evidently they've got some fire departments that are asking them for the training rather than going to the Firefighter Association, that's about all I can elaborate.

**Senator Howard Anderson** Maybe somebody can answer this question. Let's say that "A" particular fire department in Sheridan county, North Dakota wants training and gets some funding, either their own or from some grant or from the state to train their fire fighters. I wonder if they have the ability to get that training from any source they desire or if they are restricted to the training that is provided by the State Firefighters group? **Robert Knuth** To answer your question, they are free to utilize those grant funds however they see fit as long as they follow the stipulation of which ever grant they go to. There may be a requirement to

meet a certain standard or they may actually apply for a grant to receive training from a specific vendor or company or association. So as long as they stay within the boundaries of that particular grant, they are free to choose. Again, North Dakota has zero mandated training and FFA offers the training and the certification purely voluntary. So they can do whatever they feel is best for their department as long as they stay within the boundaries of that grant.

**Chairman Andrist** Do most departments have people there at these various training programs? I know there is always a problem for any volunteer organization particularly when you start getting into the corners of the state where I come from because often times they have to travel pretty great distances.

**Robert Knuth** replied I don't have the exact numbers so far for this fire school as Ms. Loh hinted at, we have over 800 firefighters. My best estimate right now without having the data base in front of me, was that we have over 100 fire departments represented. The only cost to the fire fighters and the fire departments is the travel, hotel and the per diem that they require. We've through grants gotten rid of the registration fee. I understand your concern especially the 4 corners, SW and SE particularly and we do hold those regional fire schools and the intent for those regional fire schools is to get the training as close as possible to the smaller fire departments that do not have the budget to travel. So, we are making a huge effort this year. The amount of visual fire schools we held this past year doubled in 2012, doubled than what we offered in 2011.

Closed Hearing on SB 2327.

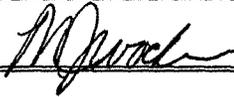
# 2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee  
Red River Room, State Capitol

SB 2327-2  
February 8, 2013  
18598

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

A Bill for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of emergency series for fire training.

## Minutes:

You may make reference to "attached testimony."

Chairman Andrist opened the committee for SB 2327. All senators were present .

Chairman Andrist asked for a motion for SB 2327.

Senator Howard Anderson made a motion for a do not pass for SB 2327

2<sup>nd</sup>- Senator Grabinger

Roll call vote 6-0-0 .

Carrier: Senator Howard Anderson

Date: 2-8-2013  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2013 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2327

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken:  Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Amended  Adopt  
Amendment

Rerefer to Appropriations  Reconsider

Motion Made By Senator Howard Anderson Seconded By Senator John Grabinger

| Senators                      | Yes | No | Senator                | Yes | No |
|-------------------------------|-----|----|------------------------|-----|----|
| Chairman John Andrist         | ✓   |    | Senator Jim Dotzenrod  | ✓   |    |
| Vice- Chairman Ronald Sorvaag | ✓   |    | Senator John Grabinger | ✓   |    |
| Senator Judy Lee              | ✓   |    |                        |     |    |
| Senator Howard Anderson, Jr.  | ✓   |    |                        |     |    |
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Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Howard Anderson

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**SB 2327: Political Subdivisions Committee (Sen. Andrist, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2327 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2013 TESTIMONY**

**SB 2327**

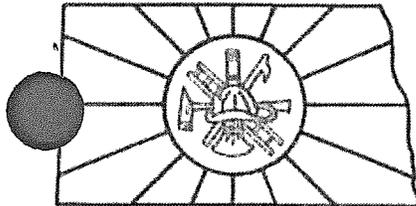
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TESTIMONY – SB 2327  
SENATE COMMITTEE – POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS  
FEBRUARY 7, 2013  
BY GREG WILZ  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Greg Wilz. I am the Deputy Director of the Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES) and the Director of the Division of Homeland Security.

The Department of Emergency Services (NDDDES) has a working relationship with all North Dakota responders. We were not aware fire training grants as outlined in SB 2327 were a need. If there is a need in this area, the Department would like the State to leverage the longstanding relationship it has with the North Dakota Fire Fighters Association. Executive Order Number 1977-3 charges the Association, in absence of a state agency with the same responsibility, to provide all levels of firefighting training and many other operational and executive responsibilities. We feel this bill duplicates a service that otherwise exists.

I recommend a do not pass vote and will endeavor to answer all questions.



# North Dakota Firefighter's Association Annual Training Report

| Class Title   | Number of Students |
|---|--------------------|
| "Two Fires - Two Separate Outcomes" & "The Command Sequence"  | 85                 |
| ABC's of SCBA's - 4hrs  | 63                 |
| Air Management for Firefighter Survival   | 16                 |
| Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program (AFG)   | 16                 |
| Auto Extrication  | 513                |
| Auto Extrication - Health Department  | 70                 |
| Automobile Extrication  | 53                 |
| Automobile Extrication Re-Certification   | 386                |
| Basic Ventilation   | 43                 |
| Beyond Helmets & Hoses, Strategy & Tactics of Leading a Volunteer or Combination Fire/Rescue Organization | 17                 |
| Building Construction/Fire behavior/Firefighter Safety  | 65                 |
| Car Fire Attack   | 40                 |
| Cars, Buses and Trucks .... Or Grinder Wrecks   | 103                |
| Class A Structural Burn Building  | 18                 |
| Courage To Be Safe So Everyone Goes Home  | 426                |
| Crew Resource Management  | 1                  |
| Crew Resource Management (CRM)  | 52                 |
| Emergency Response to Military Vehciles, Aircraft, and Facilities   | 28                 |
| Essentials of Firefighting: Basic Skills - 8hrs   | 100                |
| EVOG (FD)   | 52                 |

| Class Title   | Number of Students |
|---|--------------------|
| EVOC (FD) - Classroom only                              | 2                  |
| Farm Equipment Extrication - 4hrs                       | 1                  |
| Farm Vehicle Extrication(NFPA 1670)                     | 22                 |
| FD Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC)           | 78                 |
| Fire Department Inspections                             | 20                 |
| Fire Ground Communications                              | 31                 |
| Fire Operations in the Wildland/Oil & Gas Interface     | 40                 |
| Fire Prevention on a Shoestring                         | 9                  |
| Fire Streams and Fire Control                           | 54                 |
| Firefighter Myths                                       | 130                |
| Firefighter Survival                                    | 22                 |
| Grain Bin Extrication (attended)                        | 11                 |
| Grain Bin Extrication (Completed)                       | 23                 |
| Haz Mat Awareness                                       | 163                |
| Haz Mat operations - Classroom                          | 19                 |
| Haz Mat Operations Level                                | 48                 |
| Haz Mat Operations Level Refresher Hands-on             | 49                 |
| Hazardous Materials Operations Level Refresher Hands-on | 84                 |
| HazMat - Refresher Hands-on Practical                   | 33                 |
| HazMat Operations: Train-the-Trainer                    | 29                 |
| Hazmat Ops - Basic Metering                             | 15                 |
| Highway Response Safety                                 | 100                |
| Incident Safety Officer - 4hrs                          | 31                 |

| <b>Class Title</b>  | <b>Number of Students</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| Incident Safety Officer -16 hrs                                   | 17                        |
| Introduction to Rope Rescue                                       | 48                        |
| Junior Firefighter Program Management                             | 9                         |
| Leadership I  | 12                        |
| Leadership II: Strategies for Personal Success                    | 9                         |
| Leadership III: Strategies for Supervisory Success                | 7                         |
| Leadership, Accountability, Culture and Knowledge (LACK) Training | 78                        |
| Live Fire Propane Emergencies                                     | 27                        |
| LPG Fire Training   | 23                        |
| NFIRS   | 12                        |
| PICO (Preparing for Initial Company Operations)                   | 16                        |
| Primary Search; Back to the Basics                                | 48                        |
| Primary Search; Intermediate Level                                | 49                        |
| Pump Operations & Maintenance                                     | 48                        |
| Pump Operator/Engineer  | 30                        |
| Railroad Safety for First Responders                              | 25                        |
| Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) Trailer                             | 12                        |
| Redefining Firefighter Safety                                     | 1                         |
| Rehabilitation and Medical Monitoring                             | 40                        |
| Rescue from Storage Grain Bins (NFPA 1670)                        | 24                        |
| Responding to Oilfield Emergencies                                | 60                        |
| Responding to Wind Turbine Emergencies                            | 24                        |
| RIT (rapid intervention teams)/Live Fire Training                 | 10                        |

| <b>Class Title</b>  | <b>Number of Students</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training                          | 26                        |
| Rules of Engagement   | 42                        |
| Rural Tactics and Water Supply  | 7                         |
| S130/S190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior and Firefighter Training | 17                        |
| Safe Motor Grader Fire Suppression  | 18                        |
| Spray Plane Crashes and Extrication/Grain Bin Rescue                      | 44                        |
| Stretching and Advancing the Initial Attack Line                          | 33                        |
| Structural Burn Simulation Trailer - Advanced                             | 4                         |
| Structural Burn Simulation Trailer - Basic                                | 55                        |
| Structural Burn Simulation Trailer - Intermediate                         | 45                        |
| Ten Fire Ground Mistakes With Tim Zehnder                                 | 81                        |
| The Doctrine of Combat Fire Engagement & Five Star Command 2012           | 40                        |
| Transportation Community Awareness & Emergency Response (TRANSCAER)       | 275                       |
| Vent-Enter-Search   | 31                        |
| Wide Area Search  | 27                        |
| Wildland Fire Essentials-4  | 37                        |
| Wildland Fire Suppression Tactics   | 39                        |

**Total number of Classes Presented**     255

**Total number of Students reached**     4611