

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: H3/19/25

95th General Assembly

A Bill

Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1416

By: Representative L. Johnson

By: Senator K. Hammer

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING FIRE
DEPARTMENTS; TO ALLOW A VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICING UNINCORPORATED
AREAS OF THE COUNTY TO LEVY DUES; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING FIRE
DEPARTMENTS; AND TO ALLOW A VOLUNTEER
FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICING UNINCORPORATED
AREAS OF THE COUNTY TO LEVY DUES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-20-108(a), concerning dues for volunteer fire departments, is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1)(A) The quorum court of each county, upon request filed with the quorum court by one (1) or more volunteer fire departments ~~in the county~~ whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county, may adopt an ordinance authorizing a designated county official to collect and remit to the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county the annual dues charged by the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county in consideration of providing fire protection to those unincorporated areas in the county.

(B)(i)(a) When a quorum court receives a request for the levy of ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a volunteer fire department whose



1 fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county and the
2 request has been signed by the fire chief and the chair and secretary of the
3 board of directors, if any, of a volunteer fire department whose fire
4 protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county and filed
5 with the county clerk, the quorum court by ordinance shall call for an
6 election on the issue of the levy of ~~the volunteer fire department~~ dues for a
7 volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
8 unincorporated area of the county on each residence and on each business
9 having an occupiable structure.

10 (b)(1) The issue may be placed on the ballot
11 at a special election by order of the quorum court in accordance with § 7-11-
12 201 et seq.

13 (2) The special election shall be held
14 by August 1.

15 (c) If an attested petition is filed with the
16 county clerk and signed by a majority of registered voters in the volunteer
17 fire department district whose fire protection district covers an
18 unincorporated area of the county voting in the immediately preceding general
19 election, then the quorum court by ordinance shall dispense with a special
20 election on the issue of the levy of ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a
21 volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
22 unincorporated area of the county.

23 (d)(1) If the levy of ~~volunteer fire~~
24 ~~department~~ dues for a volunteer fire department whose fire protection
25 district covers an unincorporated area of the county is approved by a
26 majority of those voting on the issue or the county clerk determines that the
27 number of signatures of registered voters is sufficient and the quorum court
28 dispenses with a special election, the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the
29 volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
30 unincorporated area of the county shall be listed annually on real property
31 tax statements and collected by the county collector at the same time and in
32 the same manner as real property taxes.

33 (2)(A) The county collector shall report
34 delinquencies to the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district
35 covers an unincorporated area of the county for collection.

36 (B) A volunteer fire department

1 whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county
2 may collect ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the volunteer fire department
3 whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county
4 that have become delinquent and may enforce collection by proceedings in a
5 court of proper jurisdiction.

6 (ii) The cost of the election shall be borne by the
7 volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
8 unincorporated area of the county that requested the levy.

9 (2) The ordinance enacted by the quorum court shall set forth
10 the terms and conditions ~~on which the volunteer fire department~~ that the dues
11 for the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
12 unincorporated area of the county are to be collected by the county and for
13 the remission of the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the volunteer fire
14 department whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of
15 the county to the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district
16 covers an unincorporated area of the county.

17 (3) However, an active member of a volunteer fire department
18 whose annual ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying fire
19 department whose annual ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the volunteer fire
20 department whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of
21 the county are collected in this manner may be exempt from the annual
22 ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the volunteer fire department whose fire
23 protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county at the
24 discretion of the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district
25 covers an unincorporated area of the county in consideration of providing
26 services to the volunteer fire department whose fire protection district
27 covers an unincorporated area of the county.

28
29 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 14-20-108(f)-(h), concerning dues for
30 volunteer fire departments, is amended to read as follows:

31 (f) At the discretion of a volunteer fire department whose fire
32 protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county, a church
33 served by a volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers
34 an unincorporated area of the county may be exempt from ~~volunteer fire~~
35 ~~department~~ dues for a volunteer fire department whose fire protection
36 district covers an unincorporated area of the county if the church is exempt

1 from real property taxes.

2 (g)(1)(A) By December 15 of each year or upon the creation of a
3 volunteer fire department whose fire protection covers an unincorporated area
4 of the county, a volunteer fire department whose fire protection covers an
5 unincorporated area of the county that uses or intends to use the county
6 collector for collection of the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a
7 volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
8 unincorporated area of the county shall file an annual report with the county
9 clerk in any county in which a portion of the volunteer fire department whose
10 fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county is
11 located.

12 (B) The county clerk shall not charge any costs or fees
13 for filing the annual report.

14 (C) The volunteer fire department whose fire protection
15 district covers an unincorporated area of the county shall deliver a filed
16 copy of the annual report to the county collector within five (5) days of
17 filing.

18 (2) The annual report shall contain the following information as
19 of December 15 of the current calendar year:

20 (A) Identification of the volunteer fire department board
21 members whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the
22 county and contact information;

23 (B) The contact information for the volunteer fire
24 department chief whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area
25 of the county;

26 (C) Information concerning to whom the official designated
27 to remit the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the volunteer fire department
28 whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county is
29 to pay ~~volunteer fire department~~ the dues for the volunteer fire department
30 whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county;
31 and

32 (D) The amount of the annual dues charged by the volunteer
33 fire department whose fire protection district covers an unincorporated area
34 of the county by parcel or on each residence or business having an occupiable
35 structure.

36 (h) The official designated to remit the ~~volunteer fire department~~

1 dues for a volunteer fire department whose fire protection district covers an
2 unincorporated area of the county under this section shall not remit the dues
3 collected by the county collector to any volunteer fire department whose fire
4 protection district covers an unincorporated area of the county until the
5 annual report has been filed.

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7
8 /s/L. Johnson

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11 **APPROVED: 4/16/25**
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