

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1416

5 By: Representative L. Johnson
6 By: Senator K. Hammer
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL FIRE
10 DEPARTMENTS; TO ALLOW A MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT
11 SERVICING UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF THE COUNTY TO LEVY
12 DUES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
13
14

Subtitle

15
16 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPAL
17 FIRE DEPARTMENTS; AND TO ALLOW A
18 MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICING
19 UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF THE COUNTY TO
20 LEVY DUES.
21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

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

26 (a)(1)(A) The quorum court of each county, upon request filed with the
27 quorum court by one (1) or more ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire departments in the
28 county, may adopt an ordinance authorizing a designated county official to
29 collect and remit to the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department the annual dues
30 charged by the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department in consideration of
31 providing fire protection to unincorporated areas in the county.

32 (B)(i)(a) When a quorum court receives a request for the
33 levy of ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a qualifying fire department and
34 the request has been signed by the fire chief and the chair and secretary of
35 the board of directors, if any, of a ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department and
36 filed with the county clerk, the quorum court by ordinance shall call for an



1 election on the issue of the levy of ~~the volunteer fire department~~ dues for a
 2 qualifying fire department on each residence and on each business having an
 3 occupiable structure.

4 (b)(1) The issue may be placed on the ballot
 5 at a special election by order of the quorum court in accordance with § 7-11-
 6 201 et seq.

7 (2) The special election shall be held
 8 by August 1.

9 (c) If an attested petition is filed with the
 10 county clerk and signed by a majority of registered voters in the ~~volunteer~~
 11 qualifying fire department district voting in the immediately preceding
 12 general election, then the quorum court by ordinance shall dispense with a
 13 special election on the issue of the levy of ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues
 14 for a qualifying fire department.

15 (d)(1) If the levy of ~~volunteer fire~~
 16 ~~department~~ dues for a qualifying fire department is approved by a majority of
 17 those voting on the issue or the county clerk determines that the number of
 18 signatures of registered voters is sufficient and the quorum court dispenses
 19 with a special election, the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the
 20 qualifying fire department shall be listed annually on real property tax
 21 statements and collected by the county collector at the same time and in the
 22 same manner as real property taxes.

23 (2)(A) The county collector shall report
 24 delinquencies to the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department for collection.

25 (B) A ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire
 26 department may collect ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying fire
 27 department that have become delinquent and may enforce collection by
 28 proceedings in a court of proper jurisdiction.

29 (ii) The cost of the election shall be borne by the
 30 ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department that requested the levy.

31 (2) The ordinance enacted by the quorum court shall set forth
 32 the terms and conditions ~~on which the volunteer fire department~~ that the dues
 33 for the qualifying fire department are to be collected by the county and for
 34 the remission of the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying fire
 35 department to the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department.

36 (3) However, an active member of a ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire

1 department whose annual ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying
2 fire department are collected in this manner may be exempt from the annual
3 ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying fire department at the
4 discretion of the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department in consideration of
5 providing services to the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department.
6

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

9 (f) At the discretion of a ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department, a
10 church served by a ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department may be exempt from
11 ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a qualifying fire department if the church
12 is exempt from real property taxes.

13 (g)(1)(A) By December 15 of each year or upon the creation of a
14 ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department, a ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department
15 that uses or intends to use the county collector for collection of the
16 ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for a qualifying fire department shall file an
17 annual report with the county clerk in any county in which a portion of the
18 ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department is located.

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

21 (C) The ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire department shall deliver
22 a filed copy of the annual report to the county collector within five (5)
23 days of filing.

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

26 (A) Identification of the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire
27 department board members and contact information;

28 (B) The contact information for the ~~volunteer~~ qualifying
29 fire department chief;

30 (C) Information concerning to whom the official designated
31 to remit the ~~volunteer fire department~~ dues for the qualifying fire
32 department is to pay ~~volunteer fire department~~ the dues for the qualifying
33 fire department; and

34 (D) The amount of the annual dues charged by the ~~volunteer~~
35 qualifying fire department by parcel or on each residence or business having
36 an occupiable structure.

1 (h) The official designated to remit the ~~volunteer fire department~~
 2 dues for a qualifying fire department under this section shall not remit the
 3 dues collected by the county collector to any ~~volunteer~~ qualifying fire
 4 department until the annual report has been filed.

5
 6 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 14-20-108(j), concerning dues for volunteer
 7 fire departments, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as
 8 follows:

9 (j) ~~This section applies to all~~ As used in this section, "qualifying
 10 fire department" means a volunteer fire departments department, however
 11 organized, and a municipal fire department providing fire protection services
 12 outside its corporate limits to unincorporated areas of the county as
 13 described in § 14-284-406.

14
 15 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 14-284-406(a)(2), concerning unincorporated
 16 areas of a county with no rural fire department or fire protection district,
 17 is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

18 (C) A municipal fire department providing fire protection
 19 services outside of its corporate limits to unincorporated areas of the
 20 county as described in this section may have dues collected from a property
 21 owner located in the designated unincorporated area in accordance with § 14-
 22 20-108.