H. R. 2894

To amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration to provide assistance to firefighting task forces, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

Mrs. LOWEY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to authorize the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration to provide assistance to firefighting task forces, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Firefighters Special Operation Task Force Act”.

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SEC. 2. GRANTS FOR FIREFIGHTING TASK FORCES.

The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 38. ASSISTANCE FOR FIREFIGHTING TASK FORCES.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term ‘critical infrastructure’ has the meaning given that term in section 1016(e) of the Critical Infrastructures Protection Act of 2001 (42 U.S.C. 5195c(e)).

“(2) FIREFIGHTING PERSONNEL.—The term ‘firefighting personnel’ has the meaning given that term in section 33(a).

“(3) INCIDENT RESPONSE.—The term ‘incident response’ means a response by a task force or task force unit to—

“(A) a terrorist attack, including such an attack that utilizes a weapon of mass destruction;

“(B) a release of a hazardous material;

“(C) a natural disaster; or

“(D) any other emergency for which a response by a fire service is appropriate.

“(4) MEMBER.—The term ‘member’, with respect to a task force, means a fire service that is a
party to the cooperative agreement establishing the
task force.

“(5) TASK FORCE.—The term ‘task force’
means 2 or more fire services that collectively con-
sist of at least 50 firefighting personnel, operating
pursuant to a cooperative agreement for the purpose
of coordinating incident response among such fire
services.

“(b) GRANT AUTHORITY.—The Administrator may
award not more than 100 grants for task forces each fiscal
year for the purposes described in subsection (c).

“(c) PURPOSES.—A grant awarded under this section
shall be used—

“(1) to provide salary and benefits to hire fire-
fighting personnel or rehire firefighting personnel
who have been laid off to provide services to the task
force, including salary and benefits;

“(2) to pay expenses related to the participation
of firefighting personnel in appropriate training
courses;

“(3) to provide training related to incident re-
response to firefighting personnel;

“(4) to obtain appropriate equipment, including
firefighting vehicles or support systems for members
of the task force;
“(5) to improve the ability of a member of a
task force to communicate with a local police depart-
ment or hospital, or with any other appropriate gov-
ernmental or private sector entity; and

“(6) to ensure the compatibility and interoper-
ability of training and equipment with those ob-
tained by other task forces.

“(d) APPLICATION GUIDANCE.—The Administrator
shall make available to potential applicants for assistance
under this section a description of a model task force con-
figuration, which shall include—

“(1) an administrative unit, consisting of 2
chief officers, 2 captains, and 2 lieutenants, to co-
ordinate training programs, logistics, and mainte-
nance of equipment, which shall operate at least 40
hours per week;

“(2) a command unit, consisting of 1 chief offi-
cer serving as the task force commander and 1 fire-
fighter serving as communications coordinator,
which shall operate at all times;

“(3) at least 1 hazardous materials company,
consisting of 1 company officer and 5 firefighters,
which shall operate at all times;
“(4) at least 1 rescue company, consisting of 1 company officer and 5 firefighters, which shall operate at all times; and

“(5) 6 squad companies, each consisting of 1 company officer and 5 firefighters, which shall operate at all times, and which may serve, as appropriate, as a hazardous materials company or rescue company as described in paragraphs (3) and (4).

“(e) Application Requirements.—Each task force desiring assistance under this section shall submit an application to the Administrator at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Administrator may reasonably require. In order to qualify for a grant, an applicant’s proposal shall provide for—

“(1) prompt incident response;

“(2) a unified command system;

“(3) common training and equipment for task force members;

“(4) maximum coverage in the task force region, taking into account population, business centers, vital infrastructures, transportation corridors, and government centers; and

“(5) preservation during the life of the grant of the overall personnel level for each fire service, at
least at the level in effect at the time the application was submitted.

“(f) SELECTION PRIORITY.—In selecting a task force to receive assistance under this section, the Administrator shall give priority to task forces that serve a geographic area that—

“(1) has a high population density; or

“(2) is located not more than 50 miles from—

“(A) a facility that produces nuclear power;

“(B) a large facility that produces, treats, or refines chemicals or petroleum products;

“(C) a business district of national significance; or

“(D) a location with one or more critical infrastructures.

“(g) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Administrator may provide assistance to a task force under this section for a fiscal year only if the task force agrees to obtain from non-Federal sources for such fiscal year at least 55 percent of the costs of the task force. The non-Federal contributions may be in-kind contributions, including personnel, personnel overtime, vehicles, equipment, administrative costs, fuel, maintenance, contractor services, and rental space.
“(h) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2012 through 2020.”.