H. R. 3260

To establish a pilot grant program for first responder agencies that experience an extraordinary financial burden resulting from the deployment of employees.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 25, 2011

Mr. Ross of Arkansas introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Energy and Commerce, and Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

A BILL

To establish a pilot grant program for first responder agencies that experience an extraordinary financial burden resulting from the deployment of employees.

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 “Strengthening Community Safety Act of 2011”.

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SEC. 2. FIRST RESPONDER AGENCY GRANTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title XX of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“Subtitle C—Other Assistance

“SEC. 2041. FIRST RESPONDER AGENCY GRANTS.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘active duty’ has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 10, United States Code;

“(2) the term ‘eligible first responder agency’ means a first responder agency for which the cost of personnel of the agency has increased by not less than 5 percent as a direct result of 1 or more employees of the agency who are reservists being placed on active duty;

“(3) the term ‘first responder agency’—

“(A) means—

“(i) a law enforcement agency or fire service (as defined in section 4 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2203)) of a State or local government; or

“(ii) a publicly or privately operated ambulance service that is—
“(I) authorized or licensed by a State to engage in rescue activity or to provide emergency medical services; and

“(II) designated by a State as a prehospital emergency medical response agency; and

“(B) shall not include a for-profit organization; and

“(4) the term ‘reservist’ means a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, as defined in section 10101 of title 10, United States Code.

“(b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Administrator may make a grant to an eligible first responder agency for the additional costs incurred by the eligible first responder agency as a direct result of 1 or more employees of the agency or service who are reservists being placed on active duty.

“(2) LIMITATION FOR FEDERALLY FUNDED POSITIONS.—The Administrator may not make a grant under this section for costs relating to an employee being placed on active duty if Federal funds are
used, in whole or in part, for the pay or benefits of
the employee.

“(3) Maximum Amount.—The total amount of
all grants made under this section to an eligible first
responder agency in any fiscal year may not exceed
$100,000.

“(4) Termination of Grant Authority.—
The authority of the Administrator to make a grant
under this section shall terminate 3 years after the
date of enactment of this section.

“(c) Use of Funds.—

“(1) In General.—A grant under this section
may be used for—

“(A) pay and benefits for an individual
hired to replace an employee placed on active
duty that are in addition to any pay and bene-
fits that would have been provided to the de-
ployed employee;

“(B) overtime expenses for an employee
who performs tasks that would have been per-
formed by an employee placed on active duty;
and

“(C) the costs associated with filling a va-
cancy created by an employee placed on active
duty, including costs for advertising, inter-
viewing, performing background investigations, employment training, and hiring bonuses and incentives.

“(2) **Time period for reimbursable expenses.**—An eligible first responder agency that receives a grant under this section may use the grant funds to cover expenses incurred during the period that begins 90 days before the deployment of an employee of the agency and ends on the date on which the employee returns to fully paid employment status.

“(d) **Application.**—

“(1) **In general.**—Each eligible first responder agency desiring a grant 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.

“(2) **Contents.**—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) describe the activities for which assistance under this section is sought; and

“(B) provide documentation that demonstrates that the first responder agency meets the requirements in subsection (a)(2).
“(e) Authorization of Appropriations.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator $5,000,000 to carry out this section for fiscal years 2012 through 2014.”.

(b) Reporting.—

(1) Definitions.—In this subsection, the terms “active duty”, “first responder agency”, and “reservist” have the meanings given those terms in section 2041 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a).

(2) Report.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall submit to Congress a report regarding the placing on active duty of employees of first responder agencies that are reservists, including an evaluation of—

(A) the effects, including financial effects, of placing the employees on active duty on—

(i) the operation of the first responder agencies; and

(ii) the services the first responder agencies provide to the communities served by the first responder agencies; and

(B) first responder agency grants under section 2041 of the Homeland Security Act of...
2002, as added by subsection (a), including the
effect of the grants on—

(i) the operation of the first responder
agencies; and

(ii) the services the first responder
agencies provide to the communities served
by the first responder agencies.

(c) OFFSET.—Section 1532(k)(1)(D) of the Imple-
menting Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of
2007 (6 U.S.C. 1182(k)(1)(D)) is amended by striking
“$25,000,000” and inserting “$20,000,000”.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—
The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Se-
curity Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by
adding at the end the following:

“Subtitle C—Other Assistance

“Sec. 2041. First responder agency grants.”.

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