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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 14, 2011

Mr. Pryor (for himself, Mr. Conrad, Mr. Leahy, and Mr. Tester) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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”.

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 re-
response agency; and

“(B) shall not include a for-profit organi-
ization; 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 benefits that would have been provided to the deployed employee;

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

“(C) the costs associated with filling a vacancy created by an employee placed on active duty, including costs for advertising, interviewing, 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 Implementing 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 Security 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.”.