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AB-570 Fire protection: Special District Fire Response Fund: county service areas. (2023-2024)

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Assembly Bill No. 570

CHAPTER 334

An act to amend Section 8586.9 of the Government Code, relating to fire protection.

[Approved by Governor October 07, 2023. Filed with Secretary of State October 07, 2023.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 570, Gallagher. Fire protection: Special District Fire Response Fund: county service areas.

The California Constitution establishes the Special District Fire Response Fund as a subaccount within the California Fire Response Fund within the State Treasury. The California Constitution requires moneys in the Special District Fire Response Fund to be appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose of funding fire suppression staffing in underfunded special districts that provide fire protection services, as provided.

Existing law creates within the office of the Governor the Office of Emergency Services. Existing law requires the Office of Emergency Services to administer the Special District Fire Response Fund and, in coordination with the board of directors of the FIRESCOPE Program, to develop a standard grant application form, establish an annual timeline to apply for grants, employ strategies to ensure that underfunded special districts that provide fire protection services are aware of the availability of the Special District Fire Response Fund, establish reporting requirements for grant recipients, and develop metrics for consideration of grant applications, as specified.

This bill would define, for purposes of receiving grants that are funded by the Special District Fire Response Fund, a "special district that provides fire protection services" to include a county service area, as described, formed exclusively for fire protection services.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 8586.9 of the Government Code is amended to read:

8586.9. (a) The Office of Emergency Services shall administer the Special District Fire Response Fund established pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) of Section 2.2 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution.

(b) The office shall, in coordination with the board of directors of the FIRESCOPE Program, established pursuant to Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 13070) of Part 1 of Division 12 of the Health and Safety Code, do all of the following:

(1) Develop a standard application form to be used by special districts that provide fire protection services to apply for grants from the Special District Fire Response Fund that includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(A) Description of a special district's eligibility to receive a grant pursuant to the criteria contained in paragraph (2) of subdivision (f) of Section 2.2 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution.

(B) Specification of the number of additional fire suppression staff that would be supported by the grant.

(C) Identification of the benefits to firefighter health and safety and community response in the special district, if the grant is funded.

(D) Identification of opportunities to leverage other funding sources, if the grant is funded.

(2) Establish an annual timeline for special districts that provide fire protection services to apply for grants from the Special District Fire Response Fund.

(3) Employ strategies to ensure that underfunded special districts that provide fire protection services are aware of the availability of the Special District Fire Response Fund to expand and increase fire suppression staffing in qualified districts.

(4) Establish reporting requirements for special districts that are awarded grants from the Special District Fire Response Fund.

(5) Develop metrics for consideration of grant applications consistent with paragraphs (3) and (4) of Subdivision (f) of Section 2.2 of Article XIII A of the California Constitution.

(c) Notwithstanding any law, including Section 25210.7, for purposes of receiving grants that are funded by the Special District Fire Response Fund, "special district that provides fire protection services" includes a county service area, as described in Chapter 2.5 (commencing with Section 25210) of Part 2 of Division 2 of Title 3, formed exclusively for fire protection services.