STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Rep. Loudenbeck and Sen. Olsen: Bill incentivizing Fire/EMS training passes Assembly

Posted on Friday, Feb 16, 2018

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.

CONTACT:

Rep. Amy Loudenbeck

Rep.Loudenbeck@legis.wi.gov

(608) 266-9967

Sen. Luther Olsen

Sen.Olsen@legis.wi.gov

(608) 266-0751

Madison – Today, a bill authored State Representative Amy Loudenbeck (R-Clinton) and Senator Luther Olsen (R-Ripon) at the request of Governor Scott Walker passed the Assembly with a unanimous vote.

In October of 2017, Governor Walker launched his Rural Agenda focusing on comprehensively addressing the concerns of rural communities, including an initiative to reward high schools and students for successful completion of EMT or Firefighter training.

“Emergency responders in Wisconsin hold a vital role in our communities, and with this legislation our rural communities will be in even better hands. For young folks who want to become EMTs or firefighters, this legislation will help provide financial

assistance to pay for training which ultimately will help grow Wisconsin's talent pipeline for emergency responders. This will make our rural communities even safer. I'd like to thank Representative Loudenbeck and Senator Olsen for their leadership in working on this issue," said Governor Walker.

Assembly Bill 872 (AB 872) will expand the existing Career and Technical Education (CTE) Incentive Grant to include a specialized Public Safety Certification Incentive Grant program for high school students. The bill creates a new Public Safety Certification Incentive Grant Completion Award which provides a $500 student award payment upon successful completion of Firefighter I, Firefighter II or EMT Basic. In addition, school districts would receive up to $1,000 when these students graduate, consistent with the existing Career and Technical Education Incentive Grant program.

"Rural Fire and EMS Departments in Wisconsin and other states have struggled in recent years with volunteer shortages. AB 872 will help restock the volunteer fire and EMS worker pipelines by rewarding high school students who earn certain public safety credentials," said Rep. Loudenbeck.

"The $500 award payment to the student will not only incentivize participation, but also help offset out-of-pocket costs for books, exam fees, clothing and travel associated with the course. Last year, about 200 students took firefighter and EMT training at technical colleges and this incentive encourages even more students to participate," stated Sen. Olsen.

AB 872 and its Senate companion bill, SB 746, are waiting for final action in the Senate before heading to Governor Walker to be signed.

For more information about AB 872 click here or follow the link below:

https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/proposals/reg/asm/bill/ab872