



## Local Government Concerns About Senate Bill 2835

The Mississippi Association of Supervisors (MAS) and The Mississippi Municipal League (MML) are firm supporters of Mississippi's volunteer firefighters and first responders. We respect the bravery of these unpaid volunteers and paid professionals and sympathize with their dangerous occupational hazards. MAS and MML support the concept of providing benefits for volunteer firefighters and first responders. However, Mississippi's county and municipal governments cannot afford to fund Senate Bill 2835 as it is currently drafted due to the excessive costs. Section 6 of Senate Bill 2835 authorizes local governments to utilize local tax dollars to pay for the insurance coverage for all first responders, and Section 7 mandates that coverage be provided by local government tax dollars.

We consulted with the underwriter who put a plan together for counties and municipalities for the State of Georgia, as well as other states, and he has examined Senate Bill 2835 and calculated the minimum estimated premium cost per first responder at \$225.00 for the defined benefit policy. This cost is above and beyond any cost related to worker's compensation.

By the numbers:

- **Estimated 12,000 law enforcement officers**
  - $\$225.00 \times 12,000 = \$2,700,000.00$
  
- **Estimated 23,000 county & municipal firefighters**
  - $\$225.00 \times 23,000 = \$5,175,000.00$

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*Estimated Total = \$7,875,000.00      Local Government Premium Expense*

MAS and MML committed to an agreement to work with the advocates of Senate Bill 2835 to amend the bill in a way that would be feasible for local governments. Everyone agreed to a reverse repealer to keep the bill alive until we can all agree to a realistic and feasible solution. We have worked diligently to identify an estimated fiscal note for Senate Bill 2835 as it relates to the cost of municipal and county government. We ask for your support and leadership in reducing the cost of the benefits of the legislation in order to prevent an unfunded mandate that results in a local tax increase.

The Mississippi Association of Supervisors  
Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_

The Mississippi Municipal League  
Executive Director \_\_\_\_\_