

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 24: Department of the State Fire Marshal 2023 Fire Season

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Public Safety Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Lewis

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend appropriating \$8.5 million General Fund for the Department of the State Fire Marshal in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2024 legislative session to cover the remaining 2023 conflagration costs.

The Department is responsible for mobilizing firefighting resources throughout the state when local fire agencies are unable to protect structures from fire on their own. For the 2023 fire season, the Department estimates \$9.5 million in conflagration costs and \$3.1 million in readiness response costs.

The Department's 2023-25 adopted budget included \$4 million for future wildfire expenses. After payment of readiness response costs, less than \$1 million remained for the Department to apply toward the \$9.5 million in conflagration expenses. The requested \$8.5 million General Fund is for reimbursement of the remaining costs.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends approval.