

## SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

### **Item 22: Department of the State Fire Marshal Fire Cost Recovery**

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

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The Public Safety Subcommittee heard a request from the Department of the State Fire Marshal on fire cost recovery.

During the 2025 legislative session, SB 863 authorized the Department of the State Fire Marshal to seek cost recovery for fire suppression costs resulting from a person who is willful, malicious, or negligent in the origin or subsequent spread of a fire. Costs to implement the measure were minimal and absorbed with the agency's operating budget. However, the 2025 fire season resulted in nine fires that are pending investigation for potential cost recovery. In consultation with the Department of Forestry, which has similar fire cost recovery authority, the Department of the State Fire Marshal estimates approximately \$250,000 per year, or \$500,000 for the biennium, in expenditures for cost recovery efforts, which if successful would be reimbursed from cost recovery revenues.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend including an increase of \$500,000 in Other Funds expenditure limitation for the Department of the State Fire Marshal in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for fire cost recovery efforts.