

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 21: Department of the State Fire Marshal 2026 Fire Season Cash Flow

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

The Public Safety Subcommittee heard a request from the Department of the State Fire Marshal on 2026 fire season cash flow.

The Department of the State Fire Marshal is responsible for mobilizing firefighting resources throughout the state when local fire agencies are unable to protect structures from fire on their own. Over the last decade, the agency has averaged \$16.7 million in gross fire costs. In reviewing the fire payments for 2024, the heaviest fire season in the last decade, peak payments occurred in November, with approximately 28% of fire costs paid by the end of September.

The agency requested \$7 million General Fund to support cash flow for the 2026 fire season, recognizing that this will provide sufficient resources until it could report to a future meeting of the Emergency Board on actual 2026 fire costs.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means recommend appropriating \$7,000,000 General Fund for the Department of the State Fire Marshal in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for cash flow in preparation for the 2026 fire season.