

# SENATE LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **SENATE, No. 1634**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: DECEMBER 11, 2020

The Senate Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1634.

As amended and reported by the committee, this bill increases the age from 45 to 57 years by which a firefighter is required to join the fire service to be eligible for membership in the New Jersey State Firemen's Association and qualify for an exempt fireman certificate.

Under current law, a firefighter is required to join the fire service between the ages of 18 and 45 in order to qualify for an exempt fireman certificate. This amended bill increases the age to 57. Firefighters are further required to have performed a certain percentage of their department's fire duty calls based on the date, over a certain number of years. Before and up to January 1, 2009, firefighters were required to complete at least 60 percent of fire duty calls in each year of a seven year period; after January 1, 2009, the percentage of required completed calls was reduced to 50 percent in each of the seven years. If a firefighter is unable to reach the percentage benchmarks for seven years due to an injury incurred while performing fire duty, the seven years is reduced to five years.

As amended, this bill requires the Executive Committee of the New Jersey State Exempt Firemen's Association to set the required percentage of completed fire duty calls after January 1, 2019.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to:

- 1) increase the age from 45 to 57 years by which a firefighter is required to join the fire service to be eligible for membership in the New Jersey State Firemen's Association and qualify for an exempt fireman certificate; as introduced, the bill increased the age from 45 to 60 years old;
- 2) require the Executive Committee of the New Jersey State Exempt Firemen's Association to set the required percentage of completed fire duty calls after January 1, 2019; and
- 3) make the effective date retroactive to January 1, 2020.