

SENATE, No. 2078

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 15, 1997

By Senators CONNORS

1 A SUPPLEMENT to "An Act making appropriations for the support of
2 the State Government and the several public purposes for the fiscal
3 year ending June 30, 1997 and regulating the disbursement
4 thereof," approved June 28, 1996 (P.L.1996, c.42).

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6 BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
7 of New Jersey:

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9 1. In addition to the amounts appropriated under P.L.1996, c.42,
10 there is appropriated out of the General Fund the following sum for
11 the purpose specified:

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14 DIRECT STATE SERVICES
15 42 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
16 40 Community Development and Environmental Management
17 42 Natural Resource Management
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19 11-4870 Forest Resource Management \$1,350,000
20 Special Purpose:
21 Fire Fighting Costs (\$1,350,000)
22

23 2. This act shall take effect immediately.
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26 STATEMENT
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28 This bill appropriates \$1,350,000 in supplementary funding to the
29 Bureau of Forest Fire Management, by statutory mandate the New
30 Jersey Forest Fire Service, which is responsible for the protection of
31 life and property from wildfire on 3,150,000 acres of New Jersey's
32 forests, brushlands and salt marshes. The appropriation will address
33 critical manpower, equipment and maintenance shortages now facing
34 this agency by enabling it to hire 12 full-time employees, purchase
35 new fire trucks and bulldozer/plow units, and increase maintenance
36 services for existing fire fighting vehicles and equipment.

37 Although the Forest Fire Service's budget has remained relatively

1 constant over the last six years, its full-time staffing level has
2 decreased by 12 percent over the last 10 years. In addition, the
3 scheduled replacement of aging and unsafe forest fire emergency
4 vehicles and equipment has been precluded by budget shortfalls since
5 1990. At the present time, over 50 percent of attack fire engines are
6 over 10 years old, many with over 100,000 miles.

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Appropriates \$1,350,000 to the New Jersey Forest Fire Service.