

**NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL NOTE**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 55 First Edition

**SHORT TITLE:** Honor Retiring Firefighters

**SPONSOR(S):** Rep. Ray

<b>FISCAL IMPACT</b>					
	<b>Yes ( )</b>	<b>No ( )</b>	<b>No Estimate Available (X )</b>		
	<b><u>FY 2003-04</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2004-05</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2005-06</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2006-07</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2007-08</u></b>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
<b>POSITIONS: (cumulative)</b>					
<b>PRINCIPAL DEPARTMENT(S) &amp; PROGRAM(S) AFFECTED:</b>	Local fire departments				
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	When it becomes law.				

**BILL SUMMARY:**

This bill would amend G.S. § 153A-236 and G.S. § 160A-294.1 to authorize local fire departments to honor deceased firefighters by awarding their fire helmets to surviving relatives and to honor retiring firefighters by awarding each their fire helmets.

**ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY:**

This bill authorizes, but does not require, a local fire department to award fire helmets of retiring or deceased firefighters to the firefighter or surviving relative at a price to be determined by that fire department. Fire helmets are a component of a firefighter's personal protective equipment or turnout gear (PPE). The cost of the PPE is born by the local fire departments. Thus, the Fiscal Research Division estimates that there will be no fiscal impact at the State level, should a local fire department choose to award a fire helmet to a retiring firefighter or surviving relative.

Because the decision to award a firefighter or his surviving relative with his helmet and the price at which the award will be made is within the discretion of each fire department, the Fiscal Research Division cannot estimate the impact that this bill will have on the local fire departments. However, assuming that fire departments outfit new firefighters with their own PPE and only use used helmets as loaner or replacement helmets, we estimate that the fiscal impact of awarding the helmets to retiring firefighters or to surviving relatives would be

minimal. We will also note that from January 1993 until December 2001, there was an average of 417 fire retirees statewide on an annual basis. Over that same period, there was an average of 178 deaths. The cost of a helmet ranges from \$150 to \$350. With normal wear and tear, a fire helmet is expected to be replaced every 6 to 10 years. However, how frequently a fire helmet is replaced depends upon the circumstances (i.e., number and level of fires) in which it was used.

**SOURCES OF DATA:** Fire and Rescue Pension Fund

**TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS:** None

**FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION:** (919) 733-4910

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**APPROVED BY:** James D. Johnson, Director, Fiscal Research Division

**DATE:** March 11, 2003



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