

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 5, 2025

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 26, 2025

SENATE BILL

No. 423

Introduced by Senator Smallwood-Cuevas

February 18, 2025

An act to add ~~Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 2775) to Chapter 5 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, Section 84810.8 to the Education Code, and to add Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 4970) and Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 4980) to Part 4 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code,~~ relating to inmate firefighters.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 423, as amended, Smallwood-Cuevas. ~~Inmate labor: Enhancing Workforce Development for Incarcerated Firefighters Act. Inmate firefighters: postsecondary education: enhanced firefighter training and certification program: local handcrew pilot program.~~

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Under existing law, the board of governors appoints a chief executive officer, who is known as the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. Existing law requires the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to enter into an interagency agreement to expand access to community college courses that lead to degrees or certificates that result in enhanced workforce skills or transfer to a 4-year university.

This bill would require, on or before January 1, 2028, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges to expand access to community

college courses that lead to degrees and certificates in specified subjects including, among other subjects, fire science, for individuals serving in California Conservation Corps handcrews or institutional firehouses, as provided.

Existing law establishes in the Natural Resources Agency the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and requires the department to be responsible for, among other things, fire protection and prevention, as provided. Existing law establishes the California Conservation Corps ~~in the Natural Resources Agency~~ and requires the corps to implement and administer various training and educational programs, including the California Conservation Camp program. Under existing law, incarcerated persons in the California Conservation Camp program work on projects supervised by the ~~Department of Forestry and Fire Protection~~ *department*. Existing law requires the department ~~to utilize~~ *use* incarcerated persons assigned to conservation camps in performing fire prevention, fire control, and other work at the department.

~~Existing law allows a defendant who successfully participated in the California Conservation Camp program as an incarcerated individual hand crew member, or who successfully participated as a member of a county incarcerated hand crew, except as specified, to petition the court to have the pleading dismissed, as described, thus releasing the person of any penalties and disabilities of conviction, except as otherwise provided.~~

~~This bill, the Enhancing Workforce Development for Incarcerated Firefighters Act, would establish the Incarcerated Firefighter Community Reinvestment Fund, to be administered by the Department of Finance, in consultation with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The bill would require the Department of Finance, beginning July 1, 2026, and based on specified data, to calculate the savings to the state derived in the prior fiscal year from the use of incarcerated firefighters in wildfire suppression, fire prevention, and other emergency response activities, instead of the use of nonincarcerated firefighters for those purposes, and to transfer that amount into the fund. The bill would require the Department of Finance, by January 1, 2027, and subject to an appropriation by the Legislature, to develop and implement a grant program to distribute moneys in the fund for specified purposes relating to assisting formerly incarcerated firefighters after they have been released from prison, including providing workforce training and~~

housing support. The bill would require the Department of Finance to report to the Legislature, on or before January 1 of each year, various data including the cost savings and data related to recidivism. The bill would also require the Department of Finance, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to each post a copy of the Department of Finance report to their internet websites.

~~The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in consultation with specified entities including local fire departments and accredited firefighter academies, to establish a postrelease hiring program and accompanying procedures for hiring formerly incarcerated firefighters. The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in consultation with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, on or before January 1 of each calendar year, until January 1, 2030, to submit a report to the Legislature regarding, among other things, the number of individuals enrolled in the program and recommendations to enhance or expand the program.~~

~~The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in consultation with specified entities including the Chancellor's office of the Community Colleges and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, to establish a uniform fire science and emergency medical technician curriculum for use in all correctional facilities that offer firefighting or emergency medical technician programs.~~

~~The bill would require the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in partnership with, among others, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, to develop a tiered training program that includes certain modules for advanced leadership. The bill would also require the Division of Apprenticeship Standards, in collaboration with, among others, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to establish a firefighter apprenticeship framework that integrates in-custody training hours with recognized apprenticeship credits toward advanced firefighting licenses or certifications.~~

This bill would require the department, in collaboration with the California Conservation Corps and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to operate an enhanced firefighter training and certification program at the Ventura Training Center in the County of Ventura, or its successor facility, and would also require, upon appropriation of the Legislature, the operation of an enhanced

firefighter training and certification program at a facility in the northern region of the state.

The bill would authorize, upon appropriation by the Legislature, the fire chief of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department to establish the Local Handcrew Pilot Program for 5 years and would authorize the fire chief to enroll in the pilot program formerly incarcerated individuals who have successfully completed specified programs, training, or work. The bill would require the fire chief to develop metrics for evaluating the efficacy and success of the pilot program, to evaluate the efficacy and success of the pilot program using those metrics, and to report the findings of the evaluation to the Legislature and the Governor, as provided.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the Ventura Training Center in the County of Ventura.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 *SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the*
- 2 *following:*
- 3 *(1) Incarcerated individuals trained in handcrews and*
- 4 *firefighting serve a crucial role in protecting communities from*
- 5 *wildfires and other emergencies.*
- 6 *(2) A cohesive education and career training system reduces*
- 7 *recidivism, strengthens public safety, and creates a more equitable*
- 8 *and sustainable employment pathway for those who have served*
- 9 *the public on incarcerated handcrews or in institutional firehouses.*
- 10 *(3) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the*
- 11 *office of the Chancellor of California Community Colleges have*
- 12 *established workforce development programs to provide education,*
- 13 *job training, and rehabilitative services for incarcerated and*
- 14 *formerly incarcerated individuals.*
- 15 *(b) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to build upon and*
- 16 *strengthen the state's current workforce development framework*
- 17 *for incarcerated handcrew or institutional firehouse members in*
- 18 *custody and postrelease.*
- 19 *SEC. 2. Section 84810.8 is added to the Education Code, to*
- 20 *read:*

84810.8. (a) On or before January 1, 2028, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall expand access to community college courses that lead to degrees or certificates in fire science, forestry, basic emergency medical technician, or related subjects, including, but not limited to, incident command systems and fire line leadership, for individuals serving in Conservation Camp handcrews or institutional firehouses through the Rising Scholars Network established pursuant to Section 78071 or similar programs supporting postsecondary education in prisons.

(b) The educational content described in subdivision (a) may be delivered by the community colleges.

(c) If the educational content described in subdivision (a) is not delivered by community colleges, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation may contract with private postsecondary educational institutions accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or private nonprofit organizations that qualify under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code and are otherwise accredited or licensed to deliver the educational content.

SEC. 3. Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 4970) is added to Part 4 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

CHAPTER 3. ENHANCED FIREFIGHTER TRAINING AND
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

4970. The department, in collaboration with the California Conservation Corps and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, shall operate an enhanced firefighter training and certification program at the Ventura Training Center in the County of Ventura, or a successor facility in the southern region of the state.

4971. (a) The department, in collaboration with the California Conservation Corps and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, shall operate an enhanced firefighter training and certification program at a facility in the northern region of the state.

(b) The department may contract with private postsecondary educational institutions accredited by the Western Association of

1 *Schools and Colleges or private nonprofit organizations that*
2 *qualify under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue*
3 *Code and are otherwise accredited or licensed to deliver the*
4 *content of the program established pursuant to this chapter.*

5 *(c) This section shall become operative only upon an*
6 *appropriation by the Legislature for its purposes in the annual*
7 *Budget Act or another statute.*

8 *4972. The program established pursuant to this chapter shall*
9 *not replace or restrict existing or future programs and training*
10 *offered to formerly incarcerated individuals.*

11 *SEC. 4. Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 4980) is added*
12 *to Part 4 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code, to read:*

13
14 *CHAPTER 4. LOCAL HANDCREW PILOT PROGRAM*

15
16 *4980. For purposes of this chapter the following definitions*
17 *apply:*

18 *(a) "Fire chief" means the fire chief of the County of Los*
19 *Angeles Fire Department.*

20 *(b) "Program" means the Local Handcrew Pilot Program.*

21 *4981. (a) The fire chief may, in collaboration with an*
22 *authorized employee representative of the County of Los Angeles*
23 *Fire Department, establish the Local Handcrew Pilot Program.*
24 *The program shall operate for five years.*

25 *(b) The fire chief may enroll in the program formerly*
26 *incarcerated individuals who have successfully completed one or*
27 *more of the following:*

28 *(1) The California Conservation Camp program crew.*

29 *(2) Relevant programming at Camp David Gonzalez.*

30 *(3) Training at the enhanced firefighter training and certification*
31 *program established pursuant to Chapter 3 (commencing with*
32 *Section 4970).*

33 *(4) Work at an institutional firehouse.*

34 *(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the fire chief may end the*
35 *program before it has operated for five years.*

36 *4982. (a) If the fire chief establishes the program pursuant to*
37 *Section 4981, the fire chief shall do all of the following:*

38 *(1) Develop metrics for evaluating the efficacy and success of*
39 *the program.*

1 (2) Evaluate the efficacy and success of the program using the
2 metrics developed pursuant to paragraph (1).

3 (3) (A) Report the findings of the evaluation to the Legislature
4 and the Governor.

5 (B) The fire chief shall submit the report described in this
6 paragraph within 42 months of establishing the program and upon
7 conclusion of the program.

8 (b) If the fire chief ceases program operations pursuant to
9 subdivision (c) of Section 4981, the fire chief shall submit a report
10 to the Legislature and the Governor explaining the reasons for
11 ceasing operation of the program based on the metrics developed
12 pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a).

13 (c) A report submitted to the Legislature pursuant to this section
14 shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the
15 Government Code.

16 4983. The program established pursuant to this chapter shall
17 not replace or restrict existing or future programs and training
18 offered to formerly incarcerated individuals, nor displace, replace,
19 or reduce currently employed firefighters, handcrew personnel,
20 or other existing positions in the County of Los Angeles Fire
21 Department.

22 4984. This chapter shall become operative only upon an
23 appropriation by the Legislature for its purposes in the annual
24 Budget Act or another statute.

25 SEC. 5. The Legislature finds and declares that a special statute
26 is necessary and that a general statute cannot be made applicable
27 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California
28 Constitution because, following an appropriation by the Legislature
29 in the Budget Act of 2018, the Ventura Training Center has built
30 a successful postrelease rehabilitation program for formerly
31 incarcerated handcrew members that has reduced recidivism and
32 provided important reentry support services to formerly
33 incarcerated individuals, and over 400 candidates have enrolled
34 in the program with over 250 of them securing jobs in the fire
35 service.

36 ~~SECTION 1. Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 2775) is~~
37 ~~added to Chapter 5 of Title 1 of Part 3 of the Penal Code, to read:~~

Article 4.5. Enhancing Workforce Development for Incarcerated
Firefighters Act

2775. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
Enhancing Workforce Development for Incarcerated Firefighters
Act.

2775.5. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The Legislature recognizes that the Department of
Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has established workforce
development programs to provide education, job training, and
rehabilitative services for individuals in custody. However, these
programs have often lacked consistent pathways to postrelease
employment in high-demand fields, including firefighting.

(b) The provisions of this act are intended to build upon and
strengthen CDCR's current workforce development framework in
the following ways:

(1) Adding a specialized track for incarcerated firefighters that
offers comprehensive training aligned with professional wildland,
structural firefighting, and emergency medical technician standards.

(2) Formalizing a postrelease hiring pipeline, in coordination
with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and
participating local fire departments and other accredited firefighter
academies, to ensure that skills acquired in custody translate
directly into viable career opportunities.

(3) Incorporating collaborations with community colleges to
provide accredited coursework, certifications, and the academic
continuity necessary for success upon reentry.

(4) Establishing funding mechanisms to reinvest a portion of
the cost savings generated by incarcerated firefighting labor into
reentry services, workforce training, and transitional housing
support, thereby bolstering CDCR's rehabilitative impact.

(5) Ensuring a transparent and equitable determination of cost
savings resulting from the use of incarcerated firefighters,
acknowledging that incarcerated crews may function as both
supplements and replacements to traditional firefighting labor.

(6) Incorporating a methodology designed to ensure
comprehensive data collection, promote fiscal accountability, and
invest any confirmed savings back into the professional
development and reentry support of incarcerated individuals.

1 ~~(e) By linking in-custody job training with an employment~~
2 ~~system, specialized certifications, and targeted community~~
3 ~~development, this act significantly advances the effectiveness of~~
4 ~~CDCR's workforce development efforts. The result is a cohesive~~
5 ~~system that reduces recidivism, strengthens public safety, and~~
6 ~~creates a more equitable and sustainable employment pathway for~~
7 ~~those who have served the public as incarcerated firefighters.~~

8 ~~(d) The Legislature finds that incarcerated individuals trained~~
9 ~~in firefighting serve a crucial role in protecting communities from~~
10 ~~wildfires and other emergencies, filling crucial gaps in the state's~~
11 ~~emergency response force.~~

12 ~~(e) By facilitating a less restrictive path from in-custody training~~
13 ~~to employment as professional firefighters upon release, the state~~
14 ~~enhances its overall emergency response capabilities, reinforces~~
15 ~~public safety, and decreases recidivism.~~

16 ~~(f) Establishing a formal hiring pipeline and reinvestment fund~~
17 ~~underscores California's commitment to maintaining a robust and~~
18 ~~resilient firefighting workforce, ultimately safeguarding public~~
19 ~~well-being.~~

20 ~~(g) Incarcerated firefighter programs have historically generated~~
21 ~~significant cost savings for the state by supplementing the~~
22 ~~firefighting labor force at below-market wages.~~

23 ~~(h) A portion of these savings, when reinvested into structured~~
24 ~~workforce training, reentry support, and housing assistance, yields~~
25 ~~long-term fiscal benefits by reducing recidivism and dependence~~
26 ~~on public assistance.~~

27 ~~(i) Establishing a dedicated fund for community-based reentry~~
28 ~~programs and workforce initiatives creates a sustainable mechanism~~
29 ~~to transform temporary savings into enduring economic~~
30 ~~opportunities for formerly incarcerated firefighters.~~

31 ~~(j) Enacting this act will enhance the integrity and impact of~~
32 ~~California's incarcerated firefighter programs, transform cost~~
33 ~~savings into community benefits, and advance the state's broader~~
34 ~~goals of fairness, equity, and public safety.~~

35 ~~(k) It is therefore, the intent of the Legislature, in enacting this~~
36 ~~act, to build upon and strengthen CDCR's current workforce~~
37 ~~development framework for formerly incarcerated firefighters.~~

38 ~~2776. (a) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation,~~
39 ~~in consultation with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection,~~
40 ~~local fire departments, and accredited firefighter academies, shall~~

1 establish a postrelease, hiring program and procedures for hiring
2 formerly incarcerated firefighters, called the Firefighter Hiring
3 Pipeline Program. The program shall authorize the development
4 of a formerly incarcerated firefighter preference bonus points
5 program. This program shall expand access to interview
6 opportunities or provisional hiring for formerly incarcerated
7 firefighters who satisfy or exceed the minimum competencies
8 required by all relevant accrediting bodies or licensing authorities
9 for wildland or structural firefighting, and basis emergency medical
10 technician certifications.

11 (b) Local fire departments may participate in the program
12 through a memorandum of understanding with the Department of
13 Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Department of Forestry
14 and Fire Protection. Participating fire departments shall offer
15 interview opportunities or conditional job offers to eligible
16 individuals, subject to standard assessments.

17 (c) On or before January 1 of each calendar year, until January
18 1, 2030, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in
19 consultation with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection,
20 shall jointly submit a report to the Legislature that includes all of
21 the following:

22 (1) The number of individuals enrolled in the program.

23 (2) The number of individuals who successfully completed the
24 required training.

25 (3) The number of interviews and provisional hires made by
26 the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection or by local fire
27 departments.

28 (4) Recommendations to enhance or expand the program.

29 (d) The report submitted pursuant to this section shall be
30 submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government
31 Code.

32 (e) For the purposes of this article, “formerly incarcerated
33 firefighter” means an individual who participated in the California
34 Conservation Camp program while incarcerated and who is no
35 longer incarcerated.

36 2776.5. (a) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation,
37 in consultation with the Chancellor’s office of the California
38 Community Colleges, the Academic Senate for California
39 Community Colleges, private postsecondary institutions accredited
40 by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges who elect to

1 participate, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, local
2 fire departments, and the Emergency Medical Services Authority;
3 shall determine a uniform fire science and emergency medical
4 technician curriculum for use in all correctional facilities offering
5 firefighting or emergency medical technician programs.

6 (b) ~~The curriculum shall satisfy or exceed the minimum~~
7 ~~competencies required by all relevant accrediting bodies or~~
8 ~~licensing authorities for wildland and structural firefighting, and~~
9 ~~emergency medical technician certification.~~

10 (c) ~~All instructional staff shall possess credentials consistent~~
11 ~~with community college or state licensing standards, ensuring~~
12 ~~parity with external educational offerings.~~

13 (d) ~~The Chancellor's office of the California Community~~
14 ~~Colleges, in coordination with the Academic Senate for California~~
15 ~~Community Colleges and any private postsecondary institutions~~
16 ~~accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges~~
17 ~~who elect to participate, shall establish a binding articulation~~
18 ~~agreement for the transfer of academic credits earned in custody~~
19 ~~through approved fire science and emergency medical technician~~
20 ~~courses.~~

21 (e) ~~Upon release from custody, a student who satisfactorily~~
22 ~~completes coursework aligned with the articulation agreement~~
23 ~~shall be entitled to receive full credit toward relevant certificate~~
24 ~~or degree programs, without penalty or duplication of coursework~~
25 ~~requirements.~~

26 (f) ~~Educational institutions receiving transferred students~~
27 ~~pursuant to this section shall provide academic counseling and~~
28 ~~priority enrollment assistance for the first two semesters following~~
29 ~~their release from custody.~~

30 2777. (a) (1) ~~The Incarcerated Firefighter Community~~
31 ~~Reinvestment Fund is hereby established in the State Treasury.~~

32 (2) ~~The fund shall be administered by the Department of~~
33 ~~Finance, in consultation with the Department of Corrections and~~
34 ~~Rehabilitation and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection~~
35 ~~for the purpose of expanding incarcerated workforce education~~
36 ~~and training and reentry services, including transitional~~
37 ~~transportation and housing support, and shall be available, upon~~
38 ~~appropriation by the Legislature, for the purposes of this section.~~

39 (b) (1) ~~Commencing July 1, 2026, for the 2025-26 fiscal year,~~
40 ~~and each fiscal year thereafter, the Director of Finance shall~~

1 calculate the portion of cost savings or program savings to the state
2 derived from the use of incarcerated firefighters in wildfire
3 suppression, fire prevention, and other emergency response
4 activities, instead of the use of nonincarcerated firefighters for
5 those purposes. The cost-savings calculation shall be based on, at
6 a minimum, each of the following:

7 (A) Records of the total number of incarcerated firefighters
8 deployed, by incident or project, and the aggregated number of
9 hours or days each incarcerated firefighter worked.

10 (B) Records of the location and type of assignment performed.

11 (C) The daily wages or stipends paid to incarcerated firefighters.

12 (D) The cost of supervision of the incarcerated firefighters,
13 including the salaries and benefits of a correctional officer,
14 Department of Forestry and Fire Protection liaisons, or other
15 personnel dedicated to supervising incarcerated firefighting crews.

16 (E) Equipment, training, transportation, and logistical expenses
17 attributable to the California Conservation Camp program that
18 exceed baseline costs of incarceration.

19 (F) The average or median salary of nonincarcerated firefighters,
20 disaggregated by base pay and overtime rates, including
21 employer-paid benefits, pension contributions, and other fringe
22 benefits.

23 (G) The costs associated with seasonal or contract hires, as
24 applicable.

25 (H) Documentation specifying how many of the roles or hours
26 filled by incarcerated fighters would have been performed by
27 nonincarcerated firefighters compensated at base pay, overtime
28 pay, or by new hires or mutual aid.

29 (I) Historical data, including incident-level records from prior
30 fiscal years, to determine whether incarcerated firefighter crews
31 replaced or supplemented the nonincarcerated firefighter workforce.

32 (J) Identification of all instances where an incarcerated
33 firefighter performed tasks instead of a nonincarcerated firefighter
34 under normal or overtime conditions.

35 (K) The difference between the total compensation of a
36 nonincarcerated firefighter and the actual cost for an incarcerated
37 firefighter crew, including wages, training, and supervision for the
38 same hours or days worked.

39 (L) If an incarcerated firefighter crew was supplemental to
40 existing staffing levels, estimated marginal cost savings that arose

1 from avoiding overtime, deferred hiring, or reliance on higher cost
2 mutual aid.

3 ~~(M) Data accounting for, in the absence of incarcerated~~
4 ~~firefighter labor, the costs the state would have incurred for~~
5 ~~additional staffing or certain firefighting tasks that would have~~
6 ~~been incomplete.~~

7 ~~(2) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the~~
8 ~~Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall provide the data~~
9 ~~necessary for the Director of Finance to complete their annual~~
10 ~~report, including detailed cost records, personnel rosters,~~
11 ~~deployment logs, and incident-specific documentation. The~~
12 ~~Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Department~~
13 ~~of Forestry and Fire Protection shall maintain records in a manner~~
14 ~~that clearly distinguishes between baseline costs of incarceration~~
15 ~~and additional expenses specifically attributable to incarcerated~~
16 ~~firefighter programs.~~

17 ~~(e) The savings calculated pursuant to paragraph (1) of~~
18 ~~subdivision (b), and all other funds, public or private, that are~~
19 ~~designated for the purpose of expanding incarcerated workforce~~
20 ~~education and training and reentry services, including transitional~~
21 ~~transportation and housing support, shall be deposited into the~~
22 ~~fund and, subject to an appropriation by the Legislature, shall be~~
23 ~~available for expenditure in accordance with this section.~~

24 ~~(d) (1) The Department of Finance, in consultation with the~~
25 ~~Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, shall establish a~~
26 ~~grant program to distribute moneys in the fund.~~

27 ~~(2) Grants made pursuant to the program shall be used to fund~~
28 ~~all of the following:~~

29 ~~(A) Community-based reentry programs. A minimum of 25~~
30 ~~percent of the moneys in the fund shall be allocated to nonprofit~~
31 ~~organizations and service providers offering reentry support,~~
32 ~~including, but not limited to, job placement, mental health services,~~
33 ~~substance use treatment, and educational resources, to formerly~~
34 ~~incarcerated firefighters.~~

35 ~~(B) Workforce training. A minimum of 35 percent of the moneys~~
36 ~~in the fund shall be allocated to workforce development and~~
37 ~~vocational training programs for formerly incarcerated firefighters~~
38 ~~that enhance employability in firefighting, emergency services,~~
39 ~~construction, or other high-demand sectors.~~

~~(C) Housing support. A minimum of 35 percent of the moneys in the fund shall be allocated to transitional or permanent housing initiatives that aid formerly incarcerated firefighters in securing stable and affordable housing upon release from prison.~~

~~(3) Up to 5 percent of the moneys in the fund shall be used to pay for administrative costs related to the grant program, including, but not limited to, program oversight, grant administration, or compliance monitoring.~~

~~(4) (A) The Department of Finance shall promulgate regulations establishing the grant program, and shall begin funding the grant program no later than January 1, 2027.~~

~~(B) The regulations shall be adopted in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code).~~

~~(e) (1) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code, on or before January 1 of each year, the Department of Finance shall submit a report to the Legislature detailing all of the following:~~

~~(A) The total amount of savings calculated pursuant to subdivision (b).~~

~~(B) The specific programs or organizations that received grants pursuant to subdivision (d), and the amounts awarded to each program or organization.~~

~~(C) Outcome data relating to recidivism, employment, or housing stability for participants in programs funded with grants.~~

~~(D) Recommendations to improve the allocation or effectiveness of funds.~~

~~(E) The ratio of replacement to supplemental usage of incarcerated firefighters.~~

~~(F) The total hours or days attributed to replacement usage.~~

~~(G) The total hours or days attributed to supplemental usage.~~

~~(H) A summary of the wages, benefits, and overhead saved.~~

~~(2) A report submitted pursuant to these provisions shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.~~

~~(3) The Department of Finance, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall each post a copy of the report from the Department~~

1 of Finance on their internet website that describes how cost savings
2 were identified and calculated.

3 ~~2777.5. (a) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation,~~
4 ~~in partnership with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection,~~
5 ~~local fire departments, and any accredited firefighting academy,~~
6 ~~shall develop a tiered training program that includes modules for~~
7 ~~advanced leadership, including crew supervision, advanced~~
8 ~~equipment operation, and incident command systems.~~

9 ~~(b) Any individual demonstrating mastery of these modules~~
10 ~~shall receive a specialized leadership certification documented on~~
11 ~~their official record, that shall be recognized by state agencies and~~
12 ~~any local fire department participating in the postrelease Firefighter~~
13 ~~Hiring Pipeline Program.~~

14 ~~(c) The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation may enter~~
15 ~~into memoranda of understanding with professional firefighter~~
16 ~~associations or other private accredited entities to facilitate~~
17 ~~mentorship or leadership development workshops for participants~~
18 ~~who have aptitude for supervisory roles.~~

19 ~~2778. (a) The Division of Apprenticeship Standards, in~~
20 ~~collaboration with the Department of Corrections and~~
21 ~~Rehabilitation, fire departments, and the Department of Forestry~~
22 ~~and Fire Protection, shall establish a firefighter apprenticeship~~
23 ~~framework that integrates in-custody training hours with recognized~~
24 ~~apprenticeship credits toward advanced firefighting licenses or~~
25 ~~certifications.~~

26 ~~(b) The apprenticeship program shall include progressive skill~~
27 ~~tiers, culminating in advanced roles such as equipment technician,~~
28 ~~leadership officer, or specialized rescue operator.~~

29 ~~(c) Any hours completed in custody under this program shall~~
30 ~~be formally documented and honored by participating employers~~
31 ~~upon the incarcerated firefighters' release.~~