

WHEREAS, The Governor's Task Force concluded that the Emergency Assistance Trust Fund has been properly administered and has been effective in achieving its goals, particularly in respect to bringing many volunteer companies in the State's more rural counties up to minimum standards; and

WHEREAS, The Governor's Task Force has determined that a State role in improving the quality and uniformity of fire, rescue, and ambulance service is both appropriate and necessary and that the Emergency Assistance Trust Fund should be reauthorized and that a more comprehensive financial assistance program be developed; and

WHEREAS, The Governor concurs in these recommendations of the Task Force and has directed the Task Force to continue its work and attempt to establish appropriate funding guidelines for State aid during the 1984 Interim in order to insure the provision of quality fire and rescue services to the citizens of Maryland; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Chapter 239 of the Acts of 1982

[SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the provisions of Article 38A, Section 46 of the Code as enacted by Section 3 of this Act shall be of no effect and may not be enforced after June 30, 1984.]

Article 38A - Fires and Investigations

46A.

(a) (1) There is an Emergency Assistance Trust Fund to assure adequate fire protection and rescue services for the people of this State. After consultation with the Maryland State Firemen's Association, the Governor is authorized to include an amount in the State budget each year for the purposes set forth in this section. ANY PORTION OF APPROPRIATED FUNDS THAT ARE NOT OBLIGATED AT THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR SHALL NOT REVERT TO THE GENERAL FUND AND SHALL BE CARRIED OVER FOR USE IN THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR. AMOUNTS RECEIVED AS REPAYMENTS ON LOANS FROM THE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TRUST FUND SHALL BE PLACED IN THE TRUST FUND AND MADE AVAILABLE TO FUND REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

(b) The Board of Public Works may award either a grant or a loan or a combination of both from the Emergency Assistance Trust Fund after a favorable recommendation from the Department of Budget and Fiscal Planning if:

(1) An act of God or other unforeseen event has substantially impaired the ability of a volunteer fire company or rescue squad to provide adequate and safe service; or