

**HB344 INTRODUCED**



1      HB344  
2      84Q93HH-1  
3      By Representative Lipscomb  
4      RFD: County and Municipal Government  
5      First Read: 29-Jan-26



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4 SYNOPSIS:

5                   This bill would authorize a volunteer fire  
6                   department to deposit, invest, or manage funds in a  
7                   federally insured financial institution.

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10                   A BILL

11                   TO BE ENTITLED

12                   AN ACT

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14                   Relating to volunteer fire departments; to amend  
15                   Section 9-3-18.1, Code of Alabama 1975; to authorize volunteer  
16                   fire departments to deposit, invest, or manage funds in a  
17                   federally insured financial institution.

18                   BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

19                   Section 1. Section 9-3-18.1, Code of Alabama 1975, is  
20                   amended to read as follows:

21                   "§9-3-18.1

22                   (a) For the purposes of this section, the following  
23                   words have the following meanings:

24                   (1) DEPARTMENT. A volunteer fire department certified  
25                   by the State Forestry Commission and meeting the requirements  
26                   of Section 9-3-17.

27                   (2) FEDERALLY INSURED FINANCIAL INSTITUTION. Any bank  
28                   or credit union in which the deposits are insured by the



29       Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the National Credit  
30       Union Administration and the bank or credit union is chartered  
31       under state or federal law.

32           ~~(2)~~(3) SQUAD. A volunteer rescue squad located in  
33       Alabama which is a member of the Alabama Association of Rescue  
34       Squads and is either administered by a board of directors or  
35       by its membership that maintains recorded minutes of its  
36       decisions.

37           ~~(3)~~(4) STATION. The location where a volunteer fire  
38       department or a volunteer rescue squad meets, trains, and  
39       stores its motorized and nonmotorized firefighting or rescue  
40       equipment.

41           ~~(4)~~(5) VOLUNTEER FIRST RESPONDER. An individual who is  
42       a member of a volunteer fire department or a member of a  
43       volunteer rescue squad.

44           (b) To provide for the health and safety of volunteer  
45       first responders, a department or squad may use funds that are  
46       designated as restricted for accounting purposes by the  
47       Department of Examiners of Public Accounts to purchase the  
48       following:

49           (1) Kitchen equipment for the station, including  
50       refrigeration equipment, cooking equipment, microwaves, and  
51       other kitchen equipment. All kitchen equipment shall be the  
52       property of the department or squad.

53           (2) Food to be stored or refrigerated at the station  
54       for on-site consumption by volunteer first responders and  
55       electrolyte replacement or sports drinks, water, and similar  
56       liquid sustenance in any form for use by volunteer first

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57 responders during training or on a fire or rescue call.

58 (c) Any funds expended pursuant to this section shall  
59 be accounted for and maintained for a minimum of three years  
60 by the department or squad. Detailed records of all  
61 expenditures to be maintained shall include, but not be  
62 limited to, all of the following:

63 (1) All items purchased in any calendar year.

64 (2) The cost of each item purchased in any calendar  
65 year.

66 (3) The location of each item purchased in any calendar  
67 year.

68 (4) The total amount expended for each calendar year.

69 (d) (1) Any department or squad may deposit, invest, and  
70 manage funds of the department or squad in any federally  
71 insured financial institution. The funds may not be commingled  
72 with private funds.

73 (2) Every deposit of public funds under subdivision (1)  
74 shall comply with all security, reporting, and auditing  
75 requirements under local, state, and federal law.

76 ~~(d)~~ (e) A county commission shall not be responsible for  
77 the expenditures by or the activities of a volunteer fire  
78 department or a volunteer rescue squad pursuant to this  
79 section.

80 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October  
81 1, 2026.