## **BLUE VALLEY TIMES**

## **Supporting Vital First Responders**

By Ann Flood

SLATE BELT - In the spirit of celebrating Pennsylvania's firstever First Responders Day on Tuesday, Sept. 27, the House recently approved legislation that would provide new tools to help fire and emergency medical services (EMS) organizations recruit and retain personnel and maintain the vital services they provide.

To encourage people to join their local fire or EMS company, House Bill 1178 would provide \$1,000 in tuition assistance per year for fulltime students and \$500 a year in assistance to part-time students who volunteer. To be eligible, the students must participate in 30% of the company's activities, must have been a volunteer for at least



one year and promise to volunteer for another five years after graduation. The bill directs \$1 million in funding for the program.

It also would provide \$1 million for scholarships to EMS providers who complete approved training. Affordability of training is a major hurdle for EMS companies looking to both recruit and retain volunteers.

To support fire and EMS company operations, the measure also would provide:

• \$1.5 million in additional funding to be made available to EMS companies through the annual Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services Grant Program.

 \$500,000 for a grant program to support capital improvements to first responder training facilities.

• \$500,000 for a municipal fire department capital grant program to build, renovate or otherwise modernize facilities, and purchase or repair equipment.

· Fire or EMS companies that have consolidated with the ability to continue to receive as much grant funding as they would have received if they hadn't consolidated.

The bill also would allocate \$250,000 to the current firefighter online training program and \$250,000 for a public service campaign on the safe operation of fireworks.

The bill is pending action in the Senate.



Eisenhart Blvd.

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## Halloween parade route Thursday October 20th, 2022 | 7pm Bangor Memorial Park | 90 Eisenhart Blvd. Bangor PA

Bangor Borough

331 2:1:

the Great Pumpkin,

Charlie Brown!

THURSDAY

OCTOBER 20TH, 2022

BANGOR MEMORIAL PARK

This year's parade will wind through the

roadways of our Beautiful park. See that

map for all the details.

7PM

To register as a participant email

BangorElks@gmail.com

Scan for all the event details