SENATE, No. 3526

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 19, 2026

Sponsored by:
Senator JAMES BEACH
District 6 (Burlington and Camden)
Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO
District 25 (Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senators Singleton and Amato

SYNOPSIS
Authorizes creation of non-lapsing fire academy trust fund by county.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/1/2026)

AN ACT authorizing the use of dedicated revenues for the operation and maintenance of county fire academies, supplementing chapter 4 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes, and amending N.J.S.40A:4-39.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. (New section) A county may establish a trust fund account entitled "Fire Academy Trust Fund" into which shall be deposited all fees paid by individuals registering for a course at the county fire academy and from which expenditures shall be disbursed exclusively for the procurement of equipment, ongoing maintenance and supplies, and associated services necessary to operate and maintain the county fire academy.

2. N.J.S.40A:4-39 is amended to read as follows:

40A:4-39. a. In the budget of any local unit, dedicated revenues anticipated during the fiscal year from any dog tax, dog license, revenues collected pursuant to N.J.S.18A:39-1.2, solid fuel license, sinking fund for term bonds, bequest, escheat, federal grant, motor vehicle fine dedicated to road repairs, relocation costs deposited into a revolving relocation assistance fund established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1987, c.98 (C.20:4-4.1a), fee revenues collected in connection with recreation programs operated pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1999, c.292 (C.40:48-2.56), receipts from franchise assessments levied pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1995, c.173 (C.40A:12A-53) to be retained by the municipality, refund payments from a joint insurance fund deposited into a joint insurance revolving fund established pursuant to section 12 of P.L.1996, c.113 (C.40A:10-36.2), fee revenues collected in connection with the "Attorney Identification Card Program" pursuant to section 1 of P.L.2009, c.11 (C.40A:4-22.2), fee revenues imposed on delinquent amounts owed to the county or municipality and collected pursuant to section 37 of P.L.2000, c.126 (C.40:23-6.53) (as amended by section 2 of P.L.2009, c.233) or section 1 of P.L.1983, c.208 (C.40:48-5a) (as amended by section 3 of P.L.2009, c.233), <u>fee revenues collected in connection with the "Fire Academy Trust Fund" pursuant to section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill)</u> and, subject to the prior written consent of the director, other items of like character when the revenue is not subject to reasonably accurate estimate in advance, may be included in said budget by annexing to said budget a statement in substantially the following form:

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined <u>thus</u> is new matter.

"The dedicated revenues anticipated during the year ..... from ..... (here insert one or more of the sources above, as the case may be) are hereby anticipated as revenue and are hereby appropriated for the purposes to which said revenue is dedicated by statute or other legal requirement."

b. Dedicated revenues included in accordance with this section shall be available for expenditure by the local unit as and when received in cash during the fiscal year. The inclusion of such dedicated revenues shall be subject to the approval of the director, who may require such explanatory statements or data in connection therewith as the director deems advisable for the information and protection of the public.

(cf: P.L.2009, c.233, s.4)

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill authorizes any county to establish a “Fire Academy Trust Fund” into which it would deposit all fees paid by individuals registering for courses at the county fire academy and from which expenditures would be disbursed exclusively for the procurement of equipment, ongoing maintenance and supplies, and associated services necessary to operate and maintain the county fire academy.

By allowing counties to establish a trust fund for revenue generated from individuals paying a course registration fee at county fire academies, this bill permits these revenues to be dedicated to covering the costs of the fire academies beyond the one-year budget cycle otherwise provided for in the “Local Budget Law.” Without this amendment, these funds would lapse into the county budget surplus at the end of any given budget year.