

**WE THE PEOPLE**  
insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common Defence, and promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

**CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE**

# **LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK**

**115th CONGRESS - FIRST SESSION**

**UPDATED: April 24, 2017**

# CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE

## 2017 LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK

In 2017, Congress will consider a number of critically important issues to the nation's fire and emergency services. Their actions will have a direct impact on the fire service's ability to prepare for, respond to, prevent, and mitigate incidents both large and small: natural and man-made, local and national in scope. This document outlines some critical issues that will be considered during the First Session of the 115th Congress.

### **ABOUT THE FIRE SERVICE**

*(Data was compiled by the National Fire Protection Association – www.NFPA.org).*

#### **Composition of the U.S. Fire Service (2014)**

Approximately 29,980 fire departments in the US

- 2,440 – All career
- 2,045 – Mostly career
- 5,580 – Mostly volunteer
- 19,915 – All volunteer

Approximately 1,134,400 firefighters

- 346,150 career firefighters
- 788,250 volunteer firefighters

#### **Fire Losses in the United States (2015)**

- 1,345,500 fires were reported
  - These fires caused 3,280 civilian deaths, 15,700 civilian injuries, and \$14.3 billion in direct property damages.
  - 501,500 were structure fires, causing 2,560 civilian deaths, 13,000 civilian injuries, and \$10.3 billion in property damage.

#### **Fire Department Calls –33,602,500 (2015)**

- Fires – 1,345,000
- Medical Aide – 21,500,000
- False Alarms – 2,533,000
- Mutual Aide – 1,492,500
- Hazardous Materials – 442,000
- Other – 6,289,000

#### **Firefighter Deaths and Injuries (2015)**

- There were 68 on-duty firefighter deaths in 2015.
- As in most years, sudden cardiac death accounted for the largest share of the on-duty deaths (35 deaths, or 51 percent).
- There were 68,085 firefighter injuries in 2015.
- 29,130 firefighter injuries in 2015 occurred during fireground operations.

## **FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

### **HISTORY OF THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS AND STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE GRANT PROGRAMS**

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program was first authorized as part of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001. The legislation gave the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the authority to make “grants on a competitive basis directly to fire departments... for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of the public and firefighting personnel against fire and fire-related hazards.” The program also provides funding for national, state, and local organizations to carry out fire prevention and education programs.

In 2003, Congress expanded the program by creating the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program. The SAFER grant program awards grants directly to fire departments for the hiring of firefighters. Additionally, SAFER grants can be used for recruitment and retention programs for volunteer firefighters.

Last reauthorized as part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2013 (P.L. 112-239), the grant programs are currently authorized through the end of Fiscal Year 2017. Unfortunately, Congress included a “sunset” provision in the 2013 measure that will eliminate the programs on January 2, 2018 unless Congress acts to renew them.

### **AFG & SAFER GRANTS**

The AFG program has helped fire departments obtain critically-needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards. It is a competitive, peer-reviewed program that requires a local match from recipients. The grants are awarded directly to fire departments, ensuring the funds reach the end user.

The SAFER program is a competitive grant program that provides funding directly to fire departments and volunteer fire service organizations in order to help them increase the number of firefighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments’ abilities to comply with staffing, response and operational standards established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), increasing the level of firefighter health and safety. Similar to the AFG program, SAFER grants are peer-reviewed and require a local match. A portion of the funding is set aside for programs to hire firefighters in mostly-volunteer fire departments and for programs to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters.

### **FIRE PREVENTION & SAFETY GRANTS**

The Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grants are part of the AFG Program. Targeting high-risk populations, the FP&S Grants support projects that enhance the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and fire-related hazards. Congress expanded the eligible uses of funds to include Firefighter Safety Research and Development when it reauthorized the grant programs in 2005. Eligible applicants for FP&S Grants include fire departments and organizations recognized for their experience and expertise in fire prevention

## ***(Fire Prevention & Safety Grants continued...)***

and safety programs and activities. Both private and public non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for funding in this activity.

Recipients of Fire Prevention and Safety Grants provide a 5% match.

### **FOURTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE U.S. FIRE SERVICE**

The *Fourth Fire Service Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service* was completed by the National Fire Protection Association in 2016. The goal of all the surveys has been to identify major gaps in the needs of the U.S. fire service, comparing what departments have with what they need for safe and effective operations. The following are some important findings from the most recent NFPA survey.

#### **Personal Protective and Firefighting Equipment:**

Unmet needs for all types of personal protective and firefighting equipment have been greatly reduced, though far from eliminated. For example:

- 53% of all fire departments cannot equip all firefighters on a shift with self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), but this figure is down from 70% in 2001.
- 28% of all fire departments do not have enough personal alert safety system (or PASS) devices to equip all emergency responders on a shift, but this figure is down from 62% in 2001.
- 50% of all fire departments lack enough portable radios to equip all responders on a shift, down from 77% in 2001.

#### **Facilities (Stations) and Apparatus (Engines, Pumpers, Ladders):**

The AFG grants have provided considerable support, at least in the early years, for acquisition/replacement of fire department engines and pumpers. These grants have helped to hold the line on the age profile of the fire apparatus inventory. For example:

- Without engine replacement, nearly all of the 19% of engines that were at least 20 years old in 2005 would have been at least 30 years old in 2015, but the actual percentage of engines that were at least 30 years old in 2015 was 8%.

#### **Training:**

***EMS training, size of need among all departments.*** Overall, 34% of all departments provide EMS but have not formally trained all their personnel involved in EMS, largely unchanged from 33% in 2010.

***Technical rescue training, size of need among all departments.*** Overall, 40% of all departments provide technical rescue but have not formally trained all their personnel in technical rescue, down from 48% in 2010.

***Structural firefighting training, size of need among all departments.*** Overall, 49% of all departments in 2015 have not formally trained all of their personnel involved in structural firefighting, slightly up from 46% in 2010.

***(Fourth Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service continued...)***

***Hazmat training, size of need among all departments.*** Overall, 60% of all departments provide Hazmat but have not formally trained all their personnel involved in Hazmat, up from 50% in 2010.

***Wildland firefighting training, size of need among all departments.*** Overall, 63% of all departments provide wildland firefighting but have not formally trained all their personnel involved in wildland firefighting, up from 58% in 2010.

Summarizing the report, NFPA stated, “While some needs have declined, many others have been constant or have shown an increase. Gaps remain across the board in staffing, training, facilities, apparatus, personal protective equipment, and health and wellness... Evidence of the need for staffing engines; training for structural firefighting, Hazmat and wildland firefighting; and updated SCBA and personal protective clothing is concerning.

“Roles and responsibilities of the fire service are expanding apparently at the same time... that resources are being cut. EMS and Hazmat are now common responsibilities while active shooter response, enhanced technical rescue and wildland-urban interface firefighting are up and coming challenges for many departments.

“AFG and SAFER grant funds are targeted towards areas of need. As other resources are cut back, more departments turn towards these grants for support. If anything, these grant programs should grow in order to address the considerable multifaceted need that continues in the fire service (Fourth Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service, November 2016; page xvii).”

**REAUTHORIZATION OF THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS AND STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE GRANT PROGRAMS**

The Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs are immensely successful programs focused on protecting the public and the nation’s fire service. When Congress reauthorized the programs in 2013, it stated the two grant programs “have proven equally valuable in protecting the health and safety of the public and firefighting personnel throughout the United States against fire and fire-related hazards... (P.L. 112-239).” Given the expanding missions and increased call volumes of fire departments that are necessitating additional equipment, training and staffing, it is absolutely imperative that Congress reauthorize these programs in the First Session of the 115th Congress.

On April 5, 2017, Senators John McCain (AZ), Jon Tester (MT), Susan Collins (ME), and Thomas Carper (DE) introduced S. 829, legislation to reauthorize the grant programs. To improve these two successful programs, the legislation makes several minor, but critical-important changes. Specifically, S. 829:

1. Eliminates the sunset provision that will permanently terminate the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs on January 2, 2018;

***(Reauthorization of Firefighter Grant Programs continued...)***

2. Extends the authorization for the programs through Fiscal Year 2023;
3. Implements a technical correction to the individual waiver authorities under the SAFER grant program;
4. Implements a technical correction to the maintenance of expenditures provision in the SAFER grant program;
5. Implements a technical correction to the 21st Century Cures Act related to specialized training for first responders intervening with individuals with mental illnesses; and
6. Implements a technical correction to the application requirements for the SAFER grant program.

1. Elimination of the sunset provision: The current statute authorizing the AFG and SAFER grant programs contains a sunset provision that will permanently eliminate both programs on January 2, 2018. S. 829 removes this provision in order to keep the programs from expiring.

2. Extend the authorization date: The AFG and SAFER grant programs are currently authorized through the end of Fiscal Year 2017. The programs were authorized at \$750 million in FY 2013. Subsequent increases in the authorization are based on annual increases in the Consumer Price Index (all items, United States city average) vis-à-vis the previous year's Consumer Price Index. S. 829 extends the authorization through Fiscal Year 2023.

3. Individual waiver authorities: Currently, the SAFER grant program contains a provision giving the FEMA Administrator the discretion to waive (for jurisdictions with demonstrated local hardship) the prohibition on using SAFER funds to supplant state and local funds, the local match, and the requirement that applicants have sustained their fire-related programs and emergency response budgets by at least 80% in the three preceding years. Unfortunately, the statute only waives the reference to the local match requirement in one part of the statute (subsection (a)(1)(e)) and not the other (subsection (c)(4)). This discrepancy has created a situation where FEMA is unable to exercise the waiver authority as Congress intended. S. 829 implements a technical correction to the waiver authority that references both subsection (a)(1)(e) and subsection (c)(4).

4. Maintenance of expenditures: The current SAFER statute does not allow FEMA to award a SAFER grant to a jurisdiction that reduced its annual budget for fire-related programs and emergency response "below 80 percent of the average funding level in the 3 years prior to November 24, 2003." The November 24, 2003 date is an anachronism. S. 829 updates the statute by replacing "November 24, 2003" with "the application date".

5. 21st Century Cures Act: The 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255) contains a provision that amended the SAFER grant program "to provide specialized training to paramedics, emergency medical service workers, and other first responders to recognize individuals who have mental illness and how to properly intervene with individuals with mental illness, including strategies for verbal de-escalation of crises." However, the SAFER program provides grants specifically for staffing, not training. S. 829 amends the law so this provision is listed under 15 USC 2229(c)(3), the section outlining the "Use of Grant Funds" under the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) grant program. This section details the allowable uses for grant funds, including eligible training activities.

***(Reauthorization of Firefighter Grant Programs continued...)***

6. Technical correction to the SAFER application requirements: 15 U.S.C. 2229a(b) details specific requirements that applicants for a SAFER grant must meet. Unfortunately, (b)(3)(B) references subsection (a)(1)(B) (ii) which doesn't exist. S. 829 amends this section by striking "(a)(1)(B)(ii)."

The message to Congress is that AFG and SAFER continue to address the baseline needs of our nation's fire and emergency services. These two highly successful programs help ensure that our nation's 30,000 fire departments have the necessary training, equipment, and staffing to respond to over 30 million emergency calls annually and to continue to reduce community risk. Every community across the country relies on our firefighters to respond to a variety of emergency situations, including structure fires, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, and wildland/urban interface fires. Both the AFG and SAFER grant programs improve the capabilities in each of these emergency response areas, and provide funding for crucial fire prevention and safety programs targeted toward high-risk populations. It is imperative that Congress approves, and the President signs, S. 829 without delay.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**In 2015, nearly 85,000 Americans were employed in the manufacturing sector that produce fire and emergency services equipment.**

**Approximately 95% of the equipment firefighters use to protect our communities are manufactured in the United States.**

**Source: FAMA/FEMSA Government Affairs Committee: [www.famafemsagac.org/](http://www.famafemsagac.org/)**

**FUNDING FOR FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE GRANTS AND THE UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION**

The Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs are imperative to addressing the needs of more than one million fire and emergency services personnel, while providing an economic stimulus to American businesses. Congress is expected to complete work on the Fiscal Year 2017 appropriation bills this spring. Additionally, Congress will begin work on funding measures for Fiscal Year 2018. We encourage Congress to fund these critical programs at \$810 million in both Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018, and to evenly distribute the funding between the two programs. This funding level represents a restoration to the Fiscal Year 2011 funding level and will assist local fire departments in meeting the increasing costs of equipment and labor.

Recent years have witnessed a steep increase in the cost of some of the most common and sought-after firefighting equipment. An analysis by industry experts estimates that from 2011-present, the cost of protective clothing has increased by an estimated 11.4%. During the same time period, the cost of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) increased by an estimated 15%. These cost increases were due in part to the increased

***(Funding for Grants and USFA continued...)***

costs of raw materials and to necessary changes in equipment standards that improved firefighter safety.

Since 2011, there has also been a sharp increase in the cost of firefighting apparatus. The cost of pumper trucks, which make up approximately 60% of the apparatus market, has increased by an estimated 14.6% due in large part to price increases for materials and labor.

The AFG and SAFER grant programs provide the means to enhance preparedness and response capabilities nationwide to all types of hazards, as well as support fire prevention and education programs. These capabilities are squarely in the federal interest and justify continued federal investments.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) serves an important role at the national level, ensuring that the fire service is prepared to respond to all hazards. Each year, USFA provides training to approximately one million fire and emergency service personnel through the National Fire Academy (NFA). It also collects important data and conducts research to reduce the threat of fire and other dangers in local communities. Unfortunately, over the past decade, USFA's budget has been reduced by approximately 25% percent. This trend needs to stop. Continued cuts to USFA's budget will eliminate assistance to state fire training systems, reduce technical support for the data collection, and jeopardize support for the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend. We urge Congress to appropriate \$45.6 million for USFA in both Fiscal Year 2017 and Fiscal Year 2018, restoring funding for the agency to the Fiscal Year 2011 level.

**FIREFIGHTER OCCUPATIONAL CANCER**

Studies have indicated a strong link between firefighting and an increased risk of several major cancers, including colon, lung, melanoma, mesothelioma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-melanoma skin cancer, prostate, rectal, testicular, stomach, multiple myeloma and brain cancer. The heightened risk of cancer among firefighters has been attributed to their frequent exposure to a range of harmful toxins.

Studies examining cancer risks among firefighters have been limited by the availability of important data and relatively small sample sizes that have an underrepresentation of women, minorities, and volunteer firefighters. As a result, public health researchers have been unable to fully examine and understand the broader epidemiological cancer trends among firefighters. A specialized national cancer registry would expand access to vital epidemiological data and improve research outcomes.

On February 7th, Congressman Chris Collins (NY-27) and Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9) introduced H.R. 931, the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act. This bill would establish a specialized national cancer registry to be managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The registry would improve collection infrastructure and activities related to the nationwide monitoring of cancer incidence among firefighters. Specifically, the registry would:

***(Firefighter Occupational Cancer continued...)***

- Develop a firefighter registry of available data collected by existing state cancer registries and a strategy to maximize participation;
- Collect relevant history, such as other occupational information, years of service, number of fire incidents responded to, and additional risk factors;
- Make de-identified data available to public health researchers to provide them with robust and comprehensive datasets to expand groundbreaking research;
- Improve our understanding of cancer incidences by requiring its administrators to consult regularly with public health experts, clinicians, and firefighters.

H.R. 931, the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act has been referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Identical legislation, S. 382, was introduced by Senator Robert Menendez on February 15th. S. 382 was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

**FIRE SPRINKLER INCENTIVE ACT**

The cost of fire in America is enormous. In 2015, fire claimed the lives of 3,280 civilians and led to 15,700 civilian injuries. The direct property damage caused by fire was an estimated \$14.3 billion.

One of the most effective ways to minimize the loss of life and property to fire is with automatic sprinklers. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has concluded that the death rate per fire can be reduced by at least 57% and property damage decreased by up to 68% in sprinklered buildings. Fire sprinklers save lives, including firefighter lives. In fact, no firefighter has ever died fighting a fire in a fully sprinklered-structure.

Current building codes require sprinklers in many of the most vulnerable occupancies, such as student housing, commercial and residential high-rise, and entertainment complexes. Unfortunately, there are still thousands of structures that were built and put in service before sprinklers were required. In many jurisdictions, these structures are grandfathered from current standards despite the dangers of these occupancies. Many building owners would install sprinklers if they were provided an economic incentive, but the Internal Revenue Code does not offer one. Under current depreciation rules, a sprinkler system has a 39-year depreciation schedule for commercial buildings and 27.5-year schedule for residential structures.

To address this problem, Congressman Tom Reed (NY-23), Congressman James Langevin (RI-2), Senator Susan Collins (ME), and Senator Thomas Carper (DE) have introduced the Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act (H.R. 1481/S. 602). The legislation contains two parts that target high-risk structures:

1. Section 179 tax treatment- Section 179 of the tax code allows small and medium-sized businesses to fully expense certain types of equipment purchases like machines, equipment, vehicles, and computers. Fire sprinkler systems are not currently a 179 property, but this legislation would make them eligible for 179 tax treatment.

## ***IFire Sprinkler Incentive Act continued...)***

2. High-Rise Retrofits- The most vulnerable structure not covered by section 179 tax treatment are high-rise structures (buildings 7 stories or higher). In the United States, there are nearly 10,000 high-rise fires annually and they are some of the deadliest fires. This legislation will provide a financial incentive to high-rise building owners to install sprinkler systems by reducing the depreciation schedule from 39 years to 15 years. This reduction will also put sprinkler improvements more in line with the current tax code that allows 15-year depreciation for leasehold improvements.

H.R. 1481 was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee and S. 602 was referred to the Senate Finance Committee. The Joint Committee on Taxation is currently reviewing the legislation to estimate its cost.

### **VOLUNTEER RESPONDER INCENTIVE PROTECTION ACT**

The Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act, H.R. 1550, allows communities to provide volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel with property tax reductions and up to \$600 per year of recruitment and retention incentives without those benefits being subjected to federal income tax and withholding.

H.R. 1550 was introduced by Congressman David Reichert (WA-8) and Congressman John Larson (CT-1) on March 15th.

Without volunteer fire service personnel, many communities could not provide emergency services protection, while others would need to raise taxes to pay salaries and benefits for full or part-time staff. To bolster recruitment and retention, many volunteer fire departments now provide a number of incentives, including non-monetary gifts, reductions in property taxes or other fees, per-call payments, stipends, and retirement benefits. Volunteer benefits are typically small, but demonstrate community support.

As volunteer incentives have become more prevalent, the Internal Revenue Service has made ensuring that benefits are properly reported and taxed a priority. Complying with IRS reporting requirements can often be burdensome for some volunteer fire departments, many of which are located in small communities that may not employ full-time administrative staff. The Volunteer Incentive Protection Act would allow local agencies to provide nominal benefits without having to worry about being audited by the IRS. It would also enhance the incentive value of volunteer benefits by allowing individuals to keep the entire amount.

### **PROTECTING PATIENT ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICINES ACT**

On January 9th, the House approved H.R. 304, the Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medicines Act by a vote of 404-0. The legislation, sponsored by Congressman Richard Hudson (NC-8), clarifies existing law to allow EMS providers to continue dispensing controlled substances under “standing orders.”

***(Protecting Patient Access to Emergency Medicines Act continued...)***

At the Spring 2016 meeting of the Congressional Fire Services Institute's National Advisory Committee (NAC), the committee approved a resolution urging CFSI to support the legislation. The resolution was sponsored by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the National Volunteer Fire Council. The legislation will now be considered by the Senate, where it has been referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

**CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION ACT**

On January 30th, Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9) and Senator Robert Menendez (NJ) introduced the Campus Fire Safety Education Act. The legislation (H.R. 746 and S. 246, respectively) would establish a grant program at the Department of Education to make awards to institutes of higher education for fire prevention and education programs. The legislation was first introduced in response to a deadly fire at Seton Hall University on January 19, 2000. The fire claimed the lives of three students and injured over 50 others.

H.R. 746 has been referred to the House Committee on Education and Workforce. S. 246 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

**PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT**

On February 16th, Senator Charles Grassley (IA), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, introduced S. 419, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act. The bill attempts to address on-going problems with the Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program. The legislation would:

- Allow PSOB to issue rules, regulations and procedures that are based on standards developed by other Federal agencies dealing with death or disability claims of public safety officers (this is a direct response to DOJ's delay in adopting the World Trade Center Health Program and Victims' Compensation Fund findings associated with 9/11-related claims);
- Restore the "substantial weight" standard that required PSOB to give substantial weight to the findings of federal, state, and local agencies as to the cause of the public safety officer's death or disability prior to the rewrite of regulations in 2005;
- Require PSOB to post a public weekly status report on claims; and
- Require PSOB to make a detailed biannual report to Congress on claims.

The Senate Judiciary Committee approved the legislation on March 9, 2017.

## CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES CAUCUS

### Senate Co-Chairs

Senator Susan Collins (ME) - Chair  
Senator Thomas Carper (DE)  
Senator John McCain (AZ)  
Senator Jon Tester (MT)

### House Co-Chairs

Congressman Steny Hoyer (MD-5)  
Congressman Peter King (NY-2)  
Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-8)  
Congressman David Reichert (WA-8)

### The Congressional Fire Services Caucus

In 1987, the Congressional Fire Services Caucus was established to educate members of Congress about the fire and emergency services. The Caucus was created to be a bipartisan group where Republicans and Democrats could work together to improve the readiness of local first responders and to jointly recognize their valor and dedication. To preserve the bipartisan spirit of the Caucus, the chairmanship rotates every two years between Republican and Democratic members. Previous chairmen include Senators John McCain (AZ), Paul Sarbanes (MD), William V. Roth, Jr. (DE), Joseph Biden (DE), Congressman Curt Weldon (PA), Steny Hoyer (MD), Sherwood Boehlert (NY), Robert Andrews (NJ), David Reichert (WA), Peter King (NY) and Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ).

Today, the Fire Caucus is one of the largest caucuses in Congress. The Caucus is not about ideology, but rather respect and support for our nation's first responders. The Congressional Fire Services Caucus unites all members of Congress in support of fire service legislation that benefits all of our nation's fire and emergency services. Acting in a bipartisan manner, the Caucus is dedicated to addressing the needs and challenges of our nation's fire and emergency services. The Caucus serves as a forum for education and discussion on a broad range of issues that impact the readiness and response capabilities of our nation's first responders to all forms of hazards.

Members of Congress can build upon their relationships with local fire service leaders by joining the Fire Caucus. In many instances, members of the fire service are the pillars of a community. They attend the Rotary and Chamber meetings. They organize the blood drives and the Fourth of July picnics. In many smaller communities, the volunteer firefighters are also prominent business leaders. Most importantly, firefighters are among the first on the scene when a disaster strikes.

Joining the Congressional Fire Services Caucus is a win-win proposition for members of Congress and local fire departments. By joining, members are not expected to support an agenda, but rather a cause. Members of Congress interested in joining the Fire Caucus should contact one of the current co-chairs listed above.

## **ABOUT THE CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE...**

Whether you are a firefighter, emergency services responder, manufacturer or fire service leader, the United States Congress is more aware of your concerns because of the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI). Established in 1989 as a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy institute, CFSI is designed to educate members of Congress about the needs and challenges of our nation's fire and emergency services so that the federal government provides the types of training and funding needed by our first responders.

Members of Congress often turn to CFSI for its knowledge that penetrates the inner workings of Capitol Hill and the various facets of the fire and emergency services – from the culture of the fire service and various associations that represent different disciplines to the technology and training being developed by industry. Because of our nonpartisan nature, CFSI is a proven source for accurate and objective information on fire service issues. That is why CFSI has achieved unparalleled success in consensus building...not only on Capitol Hill, but among fire service organizations as well.

For CFSI, success is built around education. Each year, we provide a series of educational activities, mostly through hands-on training programs, to sensitize Congress about the challenges facing the fire service. We offer basic training programs in structural firefighting and special briefings to discuss pending fire service legislation. We publish white papers for Congress in order to share with them the consensus position of the fire service on federal fire programs and legislation.

Our motto is simple: "So That First Responders Never Stand Alone." Although you often find yourself alone performing dangerous work, CFSI stands in your place on Capitol Hill working to insure that your actions and needs are being heard by federal legislators.

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**CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE  
NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Chair  
Chief Doug Aiken  
International Municipal Signal Association

Vice Chair  
Chief Greg Cade  
National Fire Protection Association

The strength of CFSI lies in its National Advisory Committee (NAC), comprising 38 trade groups, issue organizations, and professional associations including the leading fire service organizations in the country. The NAC convenes semiannually in Washington, DC to discuss federal issues that impact the interest of all first responders. When agreement is formed, the NAC can pass resolutions calling for Congress to address particular issues. Funding for the United States Fire Administration and the AFG/SAFER grant programs, reallocation of spectrum for first responders, and greater involvement of first responders in disaster mitigation are examples of the types of issues the NAC has supported at recent meetings. Only NAC members can introduce resolutions for consideration by the committee.

American Fire Sprinkler Association	International Association of Fire Fighters
Center for Campus Fire Safety	International Association of Wildland Fire
Center for Public Safety Excellence	International Code Council
Common Voices	International Fire Buff Associates
Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association	International Fire Marshals Association
Federation of Fire Chaplains	International Fire Service Training Association
Fire Department Safety Officers Association	International Municipal Signal Association
Fire and Emergency Manufacturers and Services Association	International Society of Fire Service Instructors
Fire Apparatus Manufacturers' Association	National Association of State Fire Marshals
Fire Chief/FireRescue1	National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications
Fire Engineering Magazine	National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
Fire Rescue Magazine	National Fire Protection Association
Firehouse Magazine	National Fire Sprinkler Association
Institution of Fire Engineers—United States of America Branch	National Volunteer Fire Council
Insurance Services Office	North American Fire Training Directors
International Association of Arson Investigators	SimplexGrinnell
International Association of Black Professional Firefighters	Society of Fire Protection Engineers
International Association of Fire Chiefs	Underwriters Laboratories
	USA Sprinkler Fitters Association
	VFIS