

A Resolution Encouraging Stronger Federal Support for Home Fire Sprinkler Education and Advocacy, Including within Fire Service Community Risk Reduction Efforts

Offered by:

American Fire Sprinkler Association
International Association of Fire Chiefs (FLSS)
National Association of State Fire Marshals
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
National Fire Protection Association
National Fire Sprinkler Association
National Volunteer Fire Council

Whereas home fires are the biggest element of the US fire problem for civilians and responders;

Whereas home fires are deadlier today as a result of unprotected lightweight construction material, open floor plans and abundant synthetic furnishings which make homes burn faster, becoming deadly in two minutes or less (UL/NIST);

Whereas 93% of all civilian structure fire deaths are in homes, and home fires cause \$6.7 billion in direct property damage each year (NFPA);

Whereas residential structure fires accounted for 67 percent of firefighter injuries (USFA) and whereas 70 percent of firefighter deaths were operating at structure fires; 59 percent at one- and two- family homes (NFPA);

Whereas National Fallen Firefighter Foundation Initiative 15 supports home fire sprinklers to achieve less dangerous working conditions on the fire ground;

Whereas, the United States Fire Administration (USFA) estimates that home fire sprinklers could save thousands of lives each year if more were installed in homes;

Whereas over 1 million homes will be built in 2019, yet only 5% are sprinklered (American Housing Survey);

Whereas, over the past decade, housing trade groups spent more than \$500 million on lobbying and political contributions to keep home fire sprinklers out of state and local codes (ProPublica);

Whereas, 26 states now ban sprinkler codes for new home construction and this political manipulation also undermines fire service sprinkler education and voluntary installation;

Whereas 90% of the fire service support fire sprinklers for new homes and 80% support fire sprinkler advocacy within community risk reduction (Firehouse 2018);

Whereas including fire sprinklers in community risk reduction helps address inadequate fire service resources, staffing and budgets because when new housing stock is sprinklered it becomes safer, improving communities and allowing fire service resources to be directed to those at highest risk;

Whereas there are insufficient federal resources available to support home fire sprinkler education and counteract increased anti-code politicking that is hampering both voluntary home fire sprinkler installation and home fire sprinkler codes;

Whereas stronger federal support of home fire sprinkler education will help address confusion and anti-code negativity and encourage fire service advocacy of home fire sprinkler installation;

Whereas more installation of fire sprinklers in new homes will directly and indefinitely protect and improve communities of every size;

Whereas fire sprinklers were a main topic of concern and identified as a life saving strategy in the 1947 Fire Prevention Commission Findings established by President Harry S. Truman and remain a key initiative of the 2019 Truman Fire Forum:

Therefore, be it resolved that the Congressional Fire Services Institute supports federal funding and policies that:

1. Support fire service strategies to enhance community risk reduction with home fire sprinkler education and advocacy;
2. Raise public awareness of the dangers of home fires to both civilians and responders, underscoring the unique protective benefits of installed fire sprinklers for homes and entire communities;
3. Build awareness of the role of home fire sprinklers in further protecting responders from home-fire exposure hazards, such as cancer and other diseases;
4. Support proven, outcome-driven strategies to educate about home fire sprinklers.