



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

NEWS from Fire Fighters

1750 NEW YORK AVE NW WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 • WWW.IAFF.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 29, 2007

CONTACT: Bill Glanz
202 824-1566
202 329-5856 (cell)
David Roscow
703 276-2772, ext. 21
202 487 4990 (cell)

Fire Fighters Endorse Sen. Chris Dodd, Prepare Early-State Blitz

Dodd Offers Proven Leadership to Keep America Safe and Middle Class Families Secure

WASHINGTON – Presidential candidate Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) won the prized endorsement of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), the union that pushed Sen. John Kerry to the Democratic nomination four years ago, because of the proven leadership he offers to keep the country safe and America's middle class secure.

Invoking the nation's lack of disaster preparedness on the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's assault on the Gulf Coast, IAFF President Harold Schaitberger lamented, "Our President failed us then and continues to fail us today. The fire fighters of this nation believe we need a candidate with the leadership and experience to get this nation back on track."

Although Dodd is not among the front-runners for the nomination, Schaitberger pointed out that the IAFF four years ago decided to support Kerry when he was trailing badly in the polls. With fire fighters gathering "carloads of Kerry" supporters for Iowa's caucuses and going door to door in neighborhoods in New Hampshire, Kerry vaulted to the head of the Democratic pack and cruised to victory.

"Today we begin another challenge and exciting political journey," said Schaitberger, who was preparing to join Dodd on trips this week to Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada to rally fire fighters.

Sen. Dodd, appearing with Schaitberger, thanked the union for its endorsement.

"I am honored that America's fire fighters have put their trust in my leadership to keep America ready and keep their families secure," Sen. Dodd said.

-more-

Describing the IAFF process that weighed the opinions of leaders and members across the country, Schaitberger said the final decision came down to the capacity to lead and protect the nation. “We think that if the citizens of this country don’t feel a candidate will keep them safe and secure, the other issues won’t matter.”

Dodd has been an ardent advocate for community safety throughout his terms in the House and Senate. He authored two key laws to provide resources and manpower for first responders – the FIRE Act grants and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Act. He also helped lead the effort in Congress to implement all the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Report. As a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Dodd has played a central role in nearly every foreign policy debate over the past 25 years, working with six presidents and fostering relationships with many of today’s most important world figures.

“Chris Dodd has a wealth of experience and record of leadership on national and homeland security matters, and he is a proven leader who can bring our nation together,” the IAFF said in an emailed announcement to members. “With the boldest plans to make health insurance, college tuition and energy more affordable, we know that Chris Dodd will continue to fight for the middle class as President.”

The IAFF has a strong record of helping candidates in national, state and local levels – from both political parties. In March, the union hosted the nation’s first bipartisan presidential forum, drawing most of the major Republican and Democratic candidates.

The International Association of Fire Fighters, headquartered in Washington, DC, represents more than 281,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics in every state in the United States and in Canada. More information is available at www.iaff.org and at www.rudy-urbanlegend.com

###

Editor’s note:

Fire Fighters Endorsement Tour

Thursday, August 30 – Iowa. Iowa City 9 a.m., Des Moines 1 p.m., Council Bluffs 4:30 p.m.

Friday, August 31 – New Hampshire. Manchester 10 a.m.

Saturday, September 1 – Nevada. Reno 9 a.m., Las Vegas 2 p.m.

Chris Dodd Talking Points

Who is Chris Dodd? Why are you supporting him?

- He's been a Senator, a Congressman, he served in the Peace Corps, he served in the military... he's spent his career serving the people of this country.
- He has far and away the best record on homeland security and national security issues. He has far and away the best record on fire fighter issues. That shows leadership. He knows what it takes to keep our homeland safe and to make life better for the people who keep our economy going and who do the work in this country.
- Chris Dodd works with lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle. He has the experience our President needs so he hit the ground running. No more learning on the job. The most powerful nation in the world should have a President who commands respect, no one who is a laughingstock around the world or the butt of jokes on late night TV.
- Chris Dodd is a leader. He has the experience. He should be the next President of the United States.

Does your union's endorsement matter?

- The endorsement of our union mattered in 2004, when our members did the leg work, got out in the communities they know better than anyone else, talked to their fellow citizens and pushed John Kerry to victory in Iowa and New Hampshire when everyone else thought he was dead in the water.
- And it will make a difference again.

Will your members vote for him?

- The great thing about our union is we make an endorsement, a recommendation for President based on the issues that matter to us on the job and in the quality of life in our communities. That's exactly our union's role.
- Our union doesn't get into the other issues like abortion, second amendment, prayer in school, same sex marriage because that's not what we know, it's not our role.
- Our members are concerned about issues that affect us and our job. They are concerned about the economic issues that affect their families – like pensions, wages, benefits, health care. They know that the candidate endorsed by the IAFF has the leadership and experience to make our lives better on the job and in our communities, so they do support the endorsement.