



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

## NEWS from Fire Fighters

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### Fire Fighters Applaud Rep. Pingree's Bill Banning Hazardous Flame Retardant

Washington, DC – The International Association of Fire Fighters today applauded Chellie Pingree (D-ME) for introducing a bill to ban decabromine, a flame retardant.

Rep. Pingree's bill coincides with an announcement by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on a scheduled withdrawal of decabromine from the domestic marketplace.

"Congresswoman Pingree, more than anyone, deserves credit for helping us eliminate decabromine. The IAFF has worked for years to end the use of the controversial flame retardant," IAFF General President Harold A. Schaitberger said.

Schaitberger also credited private industry for its willingness to eliminate the toxic flame retardant. The IAFF began negotiating with the chemical industry earlier this year to ban the production, sale and use of decabromine. Those discussions helped launch both congressional and regulatory action that culminated with the introduction of Rep. Pingree's bill, the EPA's announcement and a promise by the chemical industry to withdraw the product voluntarily within three years. Decabromine has been used as a flame retardant in furniture, construction materials and electronics.

The IAFF will work hard to ensure that flame retardants that replace decabromine are safe.

"We will demand that the next generation of flame retardants be effective, environmentally friendly and safe for both citizens and fire fighters," Schaitberger said.

IAFF affiliates in several states – including Maine, Washington, Vermont and Oregon – have passed state laws banning decabromine. Maine became the first state to ban decabromine three years ago, due largely to the leadership of Speaker of the House Hanna Pingree, Rep. Pingree's daughter.

"We worked very hard to pass a bill taking decabromine off the market in our state," Professional Fire Fighters of Maine President John Martell said. "Fire fighters in Maine are proud that Representative Pingree is now leading the charge in Washington."

*The International Association of Fire Fighters, headquartered in Washington, DC, is the leading advocate in North America for the safety and training of fire fighters and paramedics. The IAFF represents more than 297,000 full-time professional fire fighters and paramedics who protect communities in every state in the United States and throughout Canada. More information is available at [www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org)*

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