



**For Immediate Release
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Joint Statement of the IAFF and IAFC

Fire Service-Based EMS Best for Protecting the Public

Washington, DC – The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) today reaffirmed their support for fire service-based emergency medical service and urged public officials to support all efforts to broaden emergency medical care and ambulance transport by the fire service to better protect the public.

The IAFC Board of Directors outlined its support for fire service-based EMS in August.

“Fire service EMS is the most efficient and effective model for the rapid delivery of all emergency medical services. When time is critical and effective pre-hospital care is necessary, the fire service is well positioned strategically, geographically, administratively, financially and operationally,” the IAFC position statement reads.

The IAFF Executive Board in September voted to reaffirm its commitment to fire service-based EMS.

“Prehospital 9-1-1 emergency response is an inherent governmental function and one of the essential public safety functions provided by fire departments throughout the United States and Canada,” the IAFF Executive Board said.

This joint statement of the IAFC and IAFF underscores that fire service-based EMS is the most efficient and effective model for the rapid delivery of emergency medical services because the fire service is strategically and geographically positioned to provide rapid EMS care. That’s why the fire service has become the first-line medical responder for critical illnesses and injuries throughout North America. For many fire departments in North America, EMS calls comprise more than 70 percent of all responses.

With public safety budgets getting slashed, public officials must recognize that the fire service is an all-hazards responder, making it the ideal prehospital 9-1-1 emergency response agency providing rapid response and competent patient care, the IAFF Executive Board said.

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 296,000 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

The International Association of Fire Chiefs represents the leadership of over 1.2 million firefighters and emergency responders. IAFC members are the world's leading experts in firefighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search and rescue and public safety legislation. Since 1873, the IAFC has provided a forum for its members to exchange ideas and uncover the latest products and services available to first responders. IAFC web site: www.iafc.org

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