



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

NEWS RELEASE

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Fire Fighters Demand Action on Public Safety

Powerful fire fighters' union convenes in Washington, D.C. to urge federal leaders to keep them safe.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Hundreds of professional fire fighters and emergency medical workers will gather in the nation's capital next week to urge elected officials to pass legislation protecting fire fighters and paramedics and giving them a stronger voice in public safety.

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) 2024 Alfred K. Whitehead Legislative Conference will be held March 3-6, 2024, in the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill. IAFF leaders representing all 50 states will meet to learn about priority legislation and advocate directly with their legislators on issues impacting jobs, health and safety, and economic security.

“Decisions are made every day in city halls and in Washington, D.C. that impact public safety and our ability to do our work,” said IAFF General President Edward Kelly. “When IAFF leaders gather in Washington next week, we’ll continue to demand Congress make a dangerous job safer for fire fighters – because we know when fire fighters are safe, the citizens we took an oath to protect are safer, too.”

The issues IAFF leaders are advocating for include:

- **The Fire Grants and Safety Act** would reauthorize the AFG and SAFER grant programs to ensure fire stations are staffed and that 911 calls are answered.
- **The Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act** would recognize first responders' occupational cancer deaths as line of duty deaths, thus providing death benefits to their survivors.
- **The PFAS Alternatives Act** would authorize a \$25 million grant to drive the development of next-generation protective gear without toxic PFAS chemicals.
- **The Public Safety Officer Free Speech Act** would ensure fire fighters and other first responders keep their rights to speak publicly about job-related issues.
- **The Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act** would ensure fire fighters and emergency medical workers have the right to work with their employers to address working conditions.

The Alfred K. Whitehead Legislative Conference has long been the cornerstone of the IAFF's

legislative efforts. The IAFF has won many significant victories over the years due in considerable measure to local IAFF leaders' work at this conference. The IAFF's political action committee, FIREPAC, is in the nation's top one-half of one percent of federal PACs.

The conference will feature remarks from General President Kelly and leading lawmakers. On Tuesday, March 5 fire fighters will join law enforcement officers for a rally on the U.S. Capitol grounds to call on Congress to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), which are responsible for reducing Social Security benefit for many fire fighters and police officers.

ABOUT THE IAFF

The International Association of Fire Fighters is the driving force behind every advance in fire and emergency services in the 21st century. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Ottawa, Ontario, the IAFF represents more than 344,000 professional fire fighters and EMS professionals. Its members protect more than 85 percent of the population throughout the U.S. and Canada.

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