

## **Resolution No. 64**

### **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Resolutions**

**Re:       Nomination of Thomas A. Thornberg for 5<sup>th</sup>  
District Vice President Emeritus of the  
International Association of Fire Fighters**

1           WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg on August 15,  
2           1974, officially began a lifelong journey of public  
3           service when he enlisted in the United States Army at  
4           the age of 17; and

5           WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg ascended to  
6           the rank of Specialist 4/E4 and was honorably  
7           discharged after fulfilling his patriotic duties to his  
8           country and the American people; and

9           WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg started his  
10          firefighting career as a 22 year old man on March 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
11          1979, with the Minneapolis Fire Department of  
12          Minneapolis, Minnesota; and

13          WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 1987,  
14          promoted to the rank of Fire Motor Operator with the  
15          Minneapolis Fire Department (MFD) of Minneapolis,  
16          Minnesota; and

17          WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 1993,  
18          promoted to the rank of Fire Captain with the  
19          Minneapolis Fire Department (MFD) of Minneapolis,  
20          Minnesota; and

21          WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg on November  
22          24<sup>th</sup>, 1993, received the Minneapolis Fire  
23          Department's (MFD) Distinguished Service Award  
24          (later renamed Medal of Valor) for his acts of

25 bravery and lifesaving rescue of four unconscious  
26 children from a burning building on Aldrich Avenue  
27 in North Minneapolis, and delivered both CPR and  
28 mouth to mouth resuscitation which resulted in  
29 saving the lives of all four children; and

30 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 1995, at the  
31 age of 38, was elected Sergeant at Arms of the  
32 International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)  
33 Local No. 82, Minneapolis, Minnesota; and

34 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2001,  
35 became President of the Minneapolis Fire Fighters  
36 Association (IAFF) Local No. 82, was re-elected two  
37 more times and served 15 years on the IAFF Local  
38 82 Executive Board until 2010; and

39 WHEREAS, during Thomas A. Thornberg's  
40 tenure as President of IAFF Local 82, Minneapolis  
41 firefighters received a cumulative 25% wage increase  
42 in their collective bargaining agreements as well as  
43 scores of other well-deserved benefits; and

44 WHEREAS, under Thomas A. Thornberg's  
45 leadership as President of IAFF Local 82, firefighter  
46 jobs in the City of Minneapolis were restored after  
47 crippling layoffs in 2001 and 32 Union members  
48 were brought back to work; and

49 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2007, was  
50 elected Vice President of Cities of the First Class of  
51 the Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters (MPFF),  
52 until 2008; and

53 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2008  
54 became the President of the Minnesota Professional  
55 Fire Fighters (MPFF), was re-elected and served 7

56 years on the Executive Board until 2013; and

57 WHEREAS, under Thomas A. Thornberg's  
58 leadership, all organized IAFF local affiliates in  
59 Minnesota were reunited, and once again became  
60 dues paying members of the MPFF making the  
61 MPFF whole; and

62 WHEREAS, under Thomas A. Thornberg's  
63 leadership, the MPFF was successful in advancing  
64 legislation at the Minnesota State Capitol that  
65 strengthened pensions for public safety officers,  
66 established the first firefighter licensing in the United  
67 States, made it lawful for full-time firefighters to  
68 fundraise while on-duty and successfully defended  
69 Union workers from devastating "right to work"  
70 legislation; and

71 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2008, was  
72 awarded the Muscular Dystrophy Association  
73 (MDA) Brick Award for laying the foundation to a  
74 cure for neuromuscular disease; and

75 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2009, was  
76 awarded the MDA Spirit Award for his philanthropic  
77 pursuit to eliminate legal barriers that would prevent  
78 firefighters from raising critical monies needed to  
79 support lifesaving treatments for children and adults  
80 affected by neuromuscular disease; and

81 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2012, was  
82 elected the 5<sup>th</sup> District Vice President of the IAFF at  
83 the 51<sup>st</sup> Convention of the International Association  
84 of Fire Fighters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and

85 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2013, was  
86 affirmed the 5<sup>th</sup> District Vice President of the IAFF in

87 a prevailing special election ordered by the United  
88 States Department of Labor; and

89 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg was re-elected  
90 two more times by acclamation and grew the 5<sup>th</sup>  
91 District of the IAFF to 131 locals, exceeding 7,100  
92 members, by the addition of 25 new charters, over a  
93 dozen affiliates to locals and more than 1,000 card-  
94 carrying Union brothers and sisters since taking  
95 office; and

96 WHEREAS, under Thomas A. Thornberg's  
97 leadership, the 5<sup>th</sup> District of the IAFF has  
98 experienced its pinnacle of unity amongst members,  
99 increased communications, improved accessibility to  
100 IAFF programs and services, and provided greater  
101 visibility to the Office of the 5<sup>th</sup> District Vice  
102 President of the IAFF; and

103 WHEREAS, under Thomas A. Thornberg's  
104 leadership, members and affiliate locals in 5<sup>th</sup> District  
105 of the IAFF have experienced strong, fair, and equal  
106 representation, and more opportunity than any other  
107 previous 5<sup>th</sup> District Vice President of the IAFF; and

108 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg's fervent  
109 career in trade unionism is a testament to the proud  
110 heritage of professional firefighters across the 5<sup>th</sup>  
111 District of the IAFF and an example to those that  
112 aspire to seek higher prospect; and

113 WHEREAS, Thomas A. Thornberg in 2016,  
114 officially retired from the Minneapolis Fire  
115 Department after a 37 ½ years long career and at the  
116 rank of Fire Captain assigned to MFD Engine  
117 Company No. 19; and

118           WHEREAS, over the course of his career in the  
119 fire service, Thomas A. Thornberg has devoted 45  
120 years and counting to his fellow Union brothers and  
121 sisters and served every day to improve their safety,  
122 increase their strength and enhance their standard of  
123 living; and

124           WHEREAS, through his friendship, integrity and  
125 industrious work ethic, Thomas A. Thornberg has  
126 become one of the most respected labor leaders  
127 across the 5<sup>th</sup> District of the IAFF and exemplifies the  
128 spirit of solidarity and virtues of the laboring class;  
129 and

130           WHEREAS, for these and many more reasons,  
131 the 7,100 members across the IAFF 5<sup>th</sup> District have  
132 seen their working conditions ameliorated and  
133 quality of life significantly improved under Thomas  
134 A. Thornberg's leadership; therefore be it

135           RESOLVED, That the delegates assembled at the  
136 57th Convention of the International Association of  
137 Fire Fighters in Boston, Massachusetts, formally  
138 bestow upon Thomas A. Thornberg the title of 5<sup>th</sup>  
139 District Vice President Emeritus of the International  
140 Association of Fire Fighters.

Submitted by: Minneapolis Fire Fighters Association Local No.  
82

Duluth Fire Fighters, Local 101

Professional Fire Fighters of Woodbury, Local  
5178

Portage Fire Fighters, Local 2775

Green Bay Fire Fighters, Local 141

Kenosha Professional Fire Fighters, Local 414  
Waukesha Fire Fighters, Local 407  
Wauwatosa Fire Fighters, Local 1923  
Coon Rapids Fire Fighters, Local 1935  
Austin Fire Fighters, Local 598  
Stevens Point Fire Fighters, Local 484  
West bend Fire Fighters, Local 2025  
St. Cloud Fire Fighters, Local 464  
Madison Fire Fighters, Local 311  
Oakdale Professional Fire Fighters, Local 5175  
Roseville Fire Fighters, Local 5051  
Racine Fire Fighters, Local 321  
Kaukauna Fire Fighters, Local 1594  
Plymouth Professional Fire Fighters, Local 5159  
Oshkosh Fire Fighters, Local 316  
Maplewood Fire Fighters, Local 4470  
Winona Fire Fighters, Local 575  
Franklin Fire Fighters, Local 2760  
Bloomington Professional Firefighters, Local  
5484  
Rochester Fire Fighters, Local 520  
Saint Paul Fire Fighters, Local 21

Cost Estimate: **Minimal**

Annual or Perpetual Designation: **Perpetual**

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Adopt**

**CONVENTION ACTION: Adopted Unanimously**