

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

Welcome to the IAFF Virtual Canadian Legislative Conference!



L'ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES POMPIERS

Bienvenue à la Conférence législative Canadienne virtuelle de l'AIP!

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**Legislative Issues Briefing
will begin shortly...**



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Legislative Issue No 1:

**Continued Emergency Funding
for municipalities to maintain
vital fire and emergency medical services**



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The issue:

It is important to ensure that municipalities, which have experienced significant revenue shortfalls due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, have enough resources to maintain vital frontline services such as fire protection and emergency medical services.





- ✓ **Governments at all levels are working hard to protect Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- ✓ **The IAFF recognizes and appreciates the many measures the federal government has already implemented in response to the pandemic**





- ✓ **Safe Restart Agreement with funding with \$19B funding for municipalities announced in July was a good start**
- ✓ **Another \$2.28B to municipalities under Fed. Gas Tax Fund (now proposed as Canada Community Building Fund)**
- ✓ **Municipalities across Canada continue to be faced with financial challenges and the challenge of maintaining the services that Canadians rely on, including fire protection and EMS**
- ✓ **It's vital to consider the short and long-term economic stability of Canadian municipalities**





- ✓ **COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance of essential frontline municipal services and the need to maintain them**
- ✓ **Pandemic has also highlighted need for a plan of action to drive economic recovery at the local level**
- ✓ **Important to national economy to keep hundreds of thousands of frontline municipal workers working**





- ✓ **Fire protection, emergency response and EMS are vital, lifesaving services that municipalities provide in order to keep their citizens and their families safe**
- ✓ **Safe and effective emergency response requires adequate resourcing of personnel, equipment**





- ✓ **Many Canadian fire department budgets were under stress prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting impact on municipal revenues**
- ✓ **Without adequate resourcing, Canadians could expect a reduction in fire and EMS response capabilities including increased response times**





- ✓ **Public safety levels could diminish dramatically in cities across Canada if the economic stability of municipalities is not adequately addressed**
- ✓ **The IAFF supports calls from the Canadian Labour Congress and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for emergency funding for municipalities from the federal government**





- ✓ The IAFF issued a statement in July calling on the Canadian Government to address emergency funding for municipalities
- ✓ The IAFF echoed that statement in our August, 2020 submission to the Standing Committee on Finance – Prebudget Consultations





- ✓ We assert that within emergency funding the federal government provides to municipalities, a portion of those funds should be earmarked for maintaining vital, frontline emergency services such as fire and EMS.





WHAT WE WANT

We're asking the Government of Canada to continue to invest in municipalities by topping up the Safe Restart Agreement to mitigate the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that a portion of those funds should be earmarked for frontline emergency services such as fire and EMS.





How your MP or Senator can help:

- Support the issue in the House of Commons
- Write a letter to Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs using template letter, c.c. Minister of Finance
- Introduce a motion or bill in consultation with IAFF Canadian Office
- Contact the IAFF Canadian Office if they need more information about the issue



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Questions?



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Legislative Issue No 2:

Banning Chemical Flame Retardants in Upholstered Furniture



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The issue:

Upholstered furniture in Canadian homes contains chemical flame retardants that are known to cause health problems. These chemicals are especially harmful to fire fighters, who encounter them in a combusted state in the course of our duties.





- ✓ **Chemicals such as PBDEs, HBCD and organohalogens are present in a range of consumer products including upholstered furniture**
- ✓ **They can accumulate in the human body and have been linked to numerous health problems**
 - **Immune disorders**
 - **Reproductive issues**
 - **Low IQ in children**
 - **Accumulate in the environment – environmental impact**



Dust collected from the interior of fire trucks was dominated by BDE-209.
Dust collected from the interior of fire trucks was dominated by BDE-209.
Fire station age and carpeting correlated with PBDE and OPFR dust concentrations.
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- ✓ **Fire fighters are exposed to higher concentrations – combustion**
- ✓ **Canadian Fire Station Dust Study (2020):**
 - **Measured flame retardant levels in fire stations in five Canadian cities**
 - **Found levels were higher than in residential homes**
 - **Chemicals were present in interior of fire trucks**
 - **Fire station age and carpeting correlated with levels**



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- ✓ **Canada has acknowledged health risks posed by certain flame retardants**
- ✓ **Banned manufacture, sale, import and use**
- ✓ **But only banned certain classes – left loopholes**
- ✓ **IAFF supports Bill C-28 – *Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act***





Bill C-28:

- Proposes consideration of chemical exposures to “vulnerable populations”
- Recognizes cumulative effects
- Recognizing importance of labelling transparency for consumers





Bill C-28:

- However, IAFF recommends adding fire fighters as vulnerable population
- Recommend Bill C-28 prioritize occupations like fire & emergency services when assessing chemical safety
- E.g. current safety tests of a chemical may not test it in a combusted state or higher levels of exposure





- ✓ Flame retardants account for 5-10% of product weight
- ✓ But are ineffective and unnecessary in upholstered furniture
- ✓ Most fires start by smouldering, not open flame
- ✓ Effective safety level for fire fighters can be achieved with smoulder resistance standard which does not require chemical flame retardants





- ✓ IAFF supports need to prioritize safer options for health & environment
- ✓ IAFF concerned “open flame testing” may be exploited by chemical industry to advocate regulations requiring increased use of chemical flame retardants
- ✓ Open flame testing is a red herring – most fires start by smouldering not open flames.





WHAT WE WANT

We're asking the Minister of Environment & Climate Change and the Minister of Health to work together to completely ban the manufacture, use and import of all classes of chemical flame retardants in Canada. We also ask them to investigate concerns that open flame testing is a red herring and that a smoulder resistance standard is more appropriate.





How your MP or Senator can help:

- Support the issue in the House of Commons
- Write a letters to Minister of Environment & Climate Change and Minister of Health
- Introduce a motion or bill in consultation with IAFF Canadian Office
- Contact the IAFF Canadian Office if they need more information about the issue



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Conference resources online:

<https://www.iaff.org/canadianlegcon2021/>



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Legislative Update



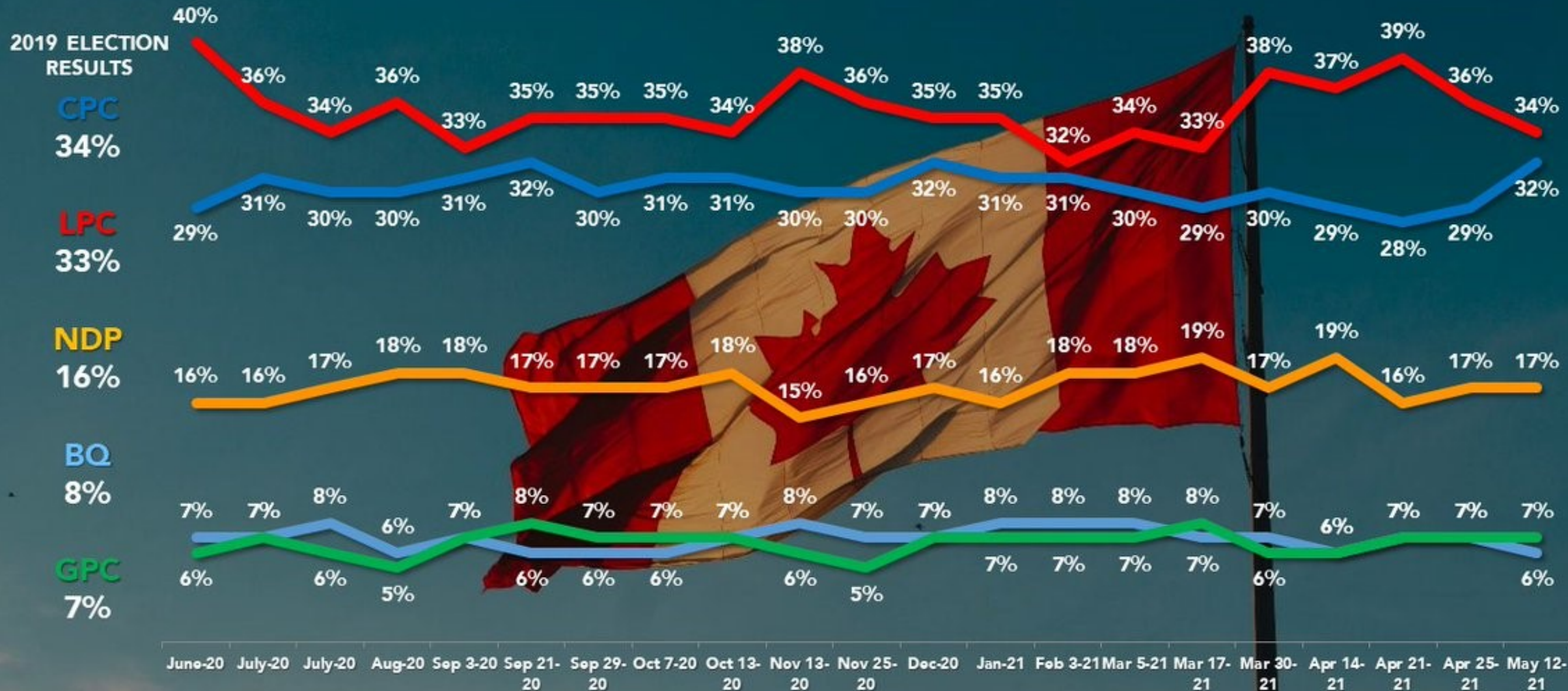
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- ✓ IAFF gearing up for late spring or more likely fall federal election
- ✓ Liberals try to get majority after two years in minority
- ✓ Liberals enjoyed lead over Conservatives in polls
- ✓ Majority territory?
- ✓ More recent polls are much closer though:



HOW WOULD YOU VOTE TOMORROW



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- ✓ IAFF Canadian Office was active in 2015 and 2019 elections
- ✓ Registered as Third Party advertiser with Elections Canada
- ✓ Will be active in next federal election too
- ✓ Non-partisan but educating members about party positions and histories on fire fighter and labour issues



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- ✓ Not shy about highlighting Liberals' record on IAFF issues
- ✓ Memorial Grant Program - \$39.6 M to families of fallen IAFF members
- ✓ PTSI resources for first responders
- ✓ Respect for unions and working families



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Other Issues



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National Building Code

- IAFF lobby issue – fire fighter safety not an objective
- Builders/designers don't have to consider it
- Can't be used as basis for code change request
- 15-year ordeal trying to address FF safety in code through NRC/CCBFC





National Building Code

- **2018 – intervention of NRC President Iain Stewart**
- **Brokered meetings between IAFF and NRC code officials**
- **Led to participation in CCBFC Exec. Committee meetings**
- **Proposed language in 2020 Edition of Code – clarifying that ‘building occupants’ may include emergency responders with specific duties**





National Building Code

- Short of a code objective, but an important first step
- 2020 code with new language to be adopted in 2021?
- A new relationship with NRC/CCBFC





Jack Jessop Biennial Canadian Policy Conference

- **Biennial Canadian Policy Conference – now named for Jack Jessop**
- **Was supposed to be held in August in Burnaby, BC**
- **Postponed – uncertainly over COVID-19 restrictions**
- **Will be held when it's safe and permitted to have large indoor meetings**
- **Fall or later in 2021?**





IAFF Canada – For You, For Your Family

- Member engagement initiative
- Decide Campaigns – Stephen Carter
- Texts, e-mails to rank & file members across Canada
- Instil pride in profession and in IAFF membership





IAFF Canada – For You, For Your Family

- Build a base of engaged members who can be reached when needed to support public safety or political action campaigns
- Uses NationBuilder platform
- Local and Provincial associations can develop your own campaigns using IAFF NationBuilder account for \$100 US per month



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About lobbying *Virtually...*



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