

FEDERAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE



Candidate Name: _____

Candidate Cell Phone Number: _____

Office Sought – U.S. Senate or U.S. House (include State & District No.): _____

Party Affiliation: _____

Campaign Committee Name: _____

Campaign Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Campaign Phone Number: _____

Campaign Website Address: _____

Campaign Social Media Platforms: _____

Campaign Manager: _____

Campaign Manager Email Address: _____

Campaign Manager Phone Number: _____

Primary Date: _____

Do you have primary opposition? Please check one: Yes No

Primary Election opponent's name(s): _____

General Election opponent's name(s): _____

Have you received the endorsement of any IAFF Local(s) or state association during your current campaign?

Yes No

If yes, please list the IAFF Local(s) or state association that have endorsed you:

What is your campaign budget? Primary: _____ General: _____

Have you ever run for or held an elected office? Yes No

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Were you endorsed by any IAFF Locals in any of your previous campaigns? Yes No

If yes, which IAFF Locals endorsed you and for which campaign?

Did you receive a campaign contribution from the IAFF Local(s) or state association? Yes No

1. PROVIDING FEDERAL DEATH BENEFITS FOR FIRE OCCUPATIONAL CANCER

Cancer continues to be the leading cause of death for fire fighters nationwide. When compared to the general public, fire fighters are 10% more likely to develop cancer and almost 15% more likely to die from cancer. Last year, the World Health Organization classified working as a fire fighter to be a Category 1 carcinogenic risk – the same level as using tobacco or unprotected exposure to radiation.

Given the multitude of toxic chemicals and carcinogens which fire fighters are exposed to daily, it is impossible to pinpoint which specific fire or exposure caused the cancer diagnosis. Congress and 49 states have passed legislation that establishes presumptive workers' compensation benefits for federal fire fighters battling cancer.

The Department of Justice's Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) program provides death and disability benefits for fire fighters and other public safety officers who are killed or seriously injured in the line of duty. The PSOB program currently recognizes several medical causes of death, such as heart attacks and 9/11-related cancer, as occupationally connected and provides death benefits to surviving families in those cases. However, the PSOB program does not recognize occupational cancer as being job-related and does not provide death or disability benefits in these cases.

Given the recent establishment of presumptive workers' compensation benefits by Congress in recognition of the cancer risks that fire fighters face, the IAFF is firmly committed to expanding the PSOB program to provide death and disability benefits for occupational cancer. Medical studies have clearly demonstrated the significantly higher cancer risks that fire fighters face due to the nature of their work, making it our duty to ensure that we do not leave behind the families of those fire fighters and other public safety officers who have died from cancer in the line of duty.

As a member of Congress, would you support expanding the DOJ's Public Safety Officers Benefits (PSOB) program to provide death and disability benefits in cases of fire fighter occupational cancer?

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2. DEVELOPING NEXT-GENERATION TURNOUT GEAR

PFAS chemicals are a recognized group of toxins that have been conclusively linked to cancer and many other serious health conditions. Fire fighters are at particular risk of developing cancer due to their chronic exposure to PFAS through their protective gear. The presence of these toxins in our protective gear is not due to smoke or emergency responses – rather it is intentionally added during the manufacturing process to comply with required performance standards. Even while wearing brand new gear, fire fighters are still exposed to these toxic chemicals that teach into their skin and are inhaled through their normal breathing.

Despite advances in materials science, fire fighters’ protective gear has largely remained unchanged in recent years. This outdated gear is often heavy and cumbersome, hindering fire fighters’ dexterity and range of motion, while also absorbing carcinogens from smoke, and making firefighting more difficult. It is essential to update the design of protective gear to ensure fire fighters perform their jobs as safely and effectively as possible.

The IAFF recognizes the urgent need for fire fighters to be equipped with next-generation turnout gear that is both toxin-free and utilizes the latest advancements in materials science to ensure maximum safety and protection on the job. Due to costly research and development expenses associated with such gear, the IAFF calls on the federal government to provide support to ensure the viability of this endeavor. It is essential that any such research and development is conducted in a collaborative fashion, with fire fighters playing an active role in the process to ensure the end product meets their specific needs and requirements. Next-generation turnout gear must be developed by fire fighters, for fire fighters.

As a member of Congress, would you support funding for research and development of fire fighter protective gear that also protects fire fighters from exposure to PFAS chemicals?

3. PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH

Fire fighters and other public safety officers play a critical role in keeping communities safe, yet their important job-related issues are often misunderstood by the public. When fire fighters speak out about these issues, such as the danger of having low staffing levels or a lack of effective tools and equipment, they often face internal discipline and or even dismissal. Even in states which provide fire fighters with the right to collective bargaining, they may still be subject to arbitrary disciplinary proceedings for exercising their constitutional right to free speech. The IAFF is actively tracking cases of fire fighters being fired or suspended for speaking with their local elected officials, submitting a letter to the editor in a local newspaper, or even supporting a public ballot referendum.

Public safety officers, such as fire fighters, deserve to have their right to free speech protected. The IAFF is advocating for a system that allows fire fighters to seek financial compensation from their employers if they are disciplined for voicing their concerns about job-related issues. These protections would only apply to legitimate job-related issues, while still preserving policies that safeguard the protection of patient data and incident information.

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As a member of Congress, would you support legislation protecting public safety officers' right to free speech without fear of retaliation?

4. PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Fire fighters and emergency medical workers face dangerous conditions while fighting fires, responding to vehicle accidents, and caring for critically ill and injured patients. Unlike private sector, fire and emergency medical workers have no federal protections for their rights to collectively bargain with their employers to improve working conditions and operational readiness. Studies show that when fire fighters and emergency medical workers collaborate with their employers, their communities have lower death rates per fire and more effective emergency responses. Fire fighters and emergency medical workers also enjoy safer working conditions, improved wages, and more secure retirements.

Sadly, this basic labor right is denied to tens of thousands of fire fighters nationwide and is routinely under attack in states that recognize this right. The IAFF firmly supports fire fighters' rights to form a union, bargain over working conditions, develop a written agreement, and establish a dispute resolution mechanism. The Cooperation Act affirms these rights, while also respecting states' right to work laws. Passage of the Cooperation Act, and establishing the right to collective bargaining, remains one of the IAFF's top legislative priorities.

As a member of Congress, would you support establishing nationwide collective bargaining rights for fire fighters?
