



The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

March 6, 2025

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

As the Administration considers efforts to ensure responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars and achieve results for U.S. citizens, the undersigned fire and emergency services organizations write today to express our strong support for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program (FFFIPP) and the National Firefighter Registry (NFR) for Cancer, among other critical HHS initiatives. These vital programs serve as essential resources for protecting the health and safety of the men and women who serve as firefighters and emergency medical personnel across the United States.

We acknowledge and appreciate the Administration's decision to exempt public safety personnel from the ongoing personnel changes and we urge you to include in this definition programs and personnel that directly support public safety operations, such as the NFR and FFFIPP. The continued functionality of these initiatives is essential to maintaining firefighter health, safety, and overall operational effectiveness.

The NIOSH Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program plays an indispensable role in identifying the causes of firefighter line-of-duty deaths and developing recommendations to prevent future tragedies. Through comprehensive investigations and in-depth analysis, NIOSH provides invaluable insights that help fire departments nationwide improve training, operational procedures, and safety protocols. These efforts have directly contributed to reducing firefighter fatalities and injuries, making our fire service community safer and more resilient.

Similarly, the National Firefighter Registry for Cancer represents a landmark initiative in understanding and addressing the occupational cancer risks faced by firefighters. Given the growing body of research demonstrating the elevated cancer risk associated with firefighting, the NFR is a crucial tool for collecting data, identifying trends, and informing policies that enhance firefighter health protections. The registry is essential for advancing research into cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment, ensuring that our firefighters receive the care and protections they deserve.

Additionally, we support the work of the National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) at the CDC, which plays a vital role in advancing research into firefighter protective equipment and technologies.

We recognize the importance of making government operations efficient and cost-effective, and we share your commitment to responsible fiscal management. However, diminishing the effectiveness of these initiatives could lead to preventable firefighter injuries, illnesses, and fatalities—outcomes that would ultimately impose greater costs on communities, both financially and in human lives. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the work



of HHS is streamlined in a manner that enhances the effectiveness of fire service and public safety initiatives.

We do want to express our appreciation to the Administration for its continued support for and understanding of the value of the World Trade Center Health Program and for protecting the workforce that relies on this essential initiative. We also appreciate the Administration's decision to exempt certain safety personnel from the ongoing personnel changes. We look forward to working with you to ensure that vital public safety initiatives and associated personnel can be maintained responsibly to ensure safety and security in America.

We appreciate your leadership in supporting the health and safety of the fire and EMS community, and we stand ready to work with you to ensure these programs continue to fulfill their vital missions. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and we welcome any opportunity to discuss the importance of these programs further.

Sincerely,

American Fire Sprinkler Association  
Center for Campus Fire Safety  
Center for Public Safety Excellence  
Common Voices  
Congressional Fire Services Institute  
Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association  
Federation of Fire Chaplains  
Fire Apparatus Manufacturers' Association  
Fire and Emergency Manufacturers and Services Association  
Fire Department Safety Officers Association  
Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association - Government Relations Committee  
Firehouse  
FireRescue1  
Institution of Fire Engineers – USA Branch  
International Association of Arson Investigators  
International Association of Fire Chiefs  
International Association of Fire Fighters  
International Association of Wildland Fire  
International Code Council  
International Fire Buff Associates, Inc.  
International Fire Marshals Association  
International Fire Service Training Association  
International Society of Fire Service Instructors  
National Association of State Fire Marshals  
National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications  
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation  
National Fire Sprinkler Association  
National Volunteer Fire Council  
North American Fire Training Directors  
SFPE Foundation  
USA Sprinkler Fitters Association  
Women in Fire

