

VOTE YES ON S.870

To Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

America's major national fire and emergency services organizations urge you to vote YES on S.870, the Fire Grants and Safety Act.

- The Fire Grants and Safety Act is a **strongly bipartisan bill** that reauthorizes funding for vital fire and emergency services grant programs – Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) – as well as the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA).
- The bill has been **unanimously favorably reported** by the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee.
- **Without reauthorization, AFG and SAFER will face a statutory sunset on September 30, 2024.**

All across the country, local fire departments of all types and sizes do not have enough staff, training, personal protective clothing, breathing apparatus, and other equipment. AFG and SAFER help ensure fire and emergency services personnel in the U.S. are properly trained, staffed, and equipped to protect their communities. These programs improve response capabilities across all emergency response areas—from fires to medical aid and hazardous materials response. AFG and SAFER are a lifeline to departments of all types—career, combination, and volunteer.

As our nation's fire and emergency service continues to face an ever-growing number of calls for service and all-hazards responses, Congress cannot allow the two largest forms of support for our nation's fire and emergency services to disappear. Without these programs, our communities will be ill-prepared to respond to acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and "routine" emergencies like house fires and medical emergencies.

Congress also faces an urgent need to reauthorize the USFA, the fire service's primary representative in the federal government and the lead federal agency for fire data collection, public safety education, fire research, and fire service training. At a time when fire and EMS personnel are responding to increasing numbers of natural disasters like hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires; more medical emergency calls than ever before; the evolving challenge of responding on the front lines of a global pandemic; the continued scourge of structural fires, including home fires; increasing numbers of calls for hazardous materials response; and much more, it is essential that the agency tasked with supporting America's fire and emergency services is properly resourced. We urge Congress to reauthorize the USFA and provide it with an authorization level that ensures the agency will be prepared to fulfill its mission and lead the fire service into the future.

Highlights from NFPA's Fifth Fire Service Needs Assessment Survey

"Fire service **needs exist for departments of all sizes and in every area**, including staffing, training and certification, facilities, apparatus, personal protective equipment (PPE); and health and wellness."

"The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) funds are targeted toward areas of need. **These grant programs must grow** in order to address the considerable and multifaceted needs that continue to persist in the fire service."

On behalf of our nation's fire service, we urge the House of Representatives to pass the Fire Grants and Safety Act (S.870) cleanly and without delay.

Sincerely,

American Fire Sprinkler Association
Center for Campus Fire Safety
Center for Public Safety Excellence
Common Voices
Congressional Fire Services Institute
Cumberland Valley Volunteer Firemen's Association
Fire Apparatus Manufacturers' Association
Fire and Emergency Manufacturers & Services Association
Fire Department Safety Officers Association
Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association – Government Relations Committee
Firehouse
Institution of Fire Engineers – United States of America 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
International Fire Marshals Association
International Fire Service Training Association
International Society of Fire Service Instructors
Johnson Controls
Lexipol
National Association of State Fire Marshals
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
National Fire Protection Association
National Fire Service Professional Qualifications Board
National Fire Sprinkler Association
National Volunteer Fire Council
North American Fire Training Directors
USA Sprinkler Fitters
Women in Fire