



KEY LARGO FIRE RESCUE & EMS DISTRICT

*Seat 1, Tony Allen, Seat 2, Jennifer Miller; Seat 3, Bob Thomas;
Seat 4, George Mirabella; Seat 5, Marilyn Beyer*

SAMPLE LETTER

January 3, 2014

Senator Marco Rubio
317 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Sent to 44 Committee Members &
Selected U.S. Government Elected Officials

Dear Senator Rubio:

I strongly urge you to support the **Key Largo Fire Rescue & Emergency Medical Services (KLFR&EMS) District's** (Monroe County, Florida) volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel by cosponsoring H.R. 3685, the Protect Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

According to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) (P.L. 111-148), employers with more than 50 full-time employees (or their equivalents (FTE)) must provide health insurance to employees that work more than 30 hours per week. Unfortunately, the Internal Revenue Service has ruled that volunteer firefighters that receive nominal benefits from their fire departments (including stipends, end-of-the-year banquets and awards) count as "employees" of fire departments. An unintended consequence of this IRS ruling is that fire departments may have to provide health insurance to volunteers that serve more than 30 hours per week at their local fire department.

The effect of this provision could be devastating to fire departments. Many volunteer fire departments rely upon local donations and fundraisers to fund their basic operations. The addition of a requirement to provide health insurance would present a serious financial challenge to them. Some departments have taken steps to reduce staffing levels and shifts in order to fall under the 50-FTE and 30-hours-worked threshold, which reduces the fire department's baseline emergency response capabilities.

H.R. 3685 would solve this issue by clarifying that nominally compensated volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel should not be counted as employees of their agencies for the purposes of the PPACA.

I sincerely hope you will support the passage of this bill and help the **Key Largo Fire Rescue & Emergency Medical Services District** to continue to serve our community.

Sincerely,

Robert Thomas
KLFR&EMS District Chairman

The KLFR&EMS District Mission is to provide *exceptional* fire protection and emergency medical services *efficiently* and *cost-effectively* without compromising the health or safety of residents or personnel.

KLFR&EMS District, P. O. Box 371023, Key Largo, FL 33037-1023



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CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE

January 17, 2014

Mr. Robert Thomas
Key Largo Fire Rescue EMS Department
P.O. Box 371023
Key Largo, FL 33037

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Thank you for contacting the Congressional Fire Services Institute to ask for our support of the Protect Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act. As you may have heard, the U.S. Department of Treasury recently issued a statement saying that the final regulations will contain language favorable to the volunteer fire service.

I have attached a release we issued in December informing the fire service how CFSI has been working with the IAFC and NVFC on this particular issue. Much of our efforts were focused on working with our supporters on Capitol Hill to ensure that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act would not have an unintended negative consequence on the volunteer fire service. The successful outcome was due in large part to the bipartisan efforts of our elected officials and the cooperative contributions of many fire organizations and individuals.

Thank you again for contacting us, and best wishes for your continued success and safety.

Sincerely,

Bill Webb
Executive Director

ABOUT CFSI CONGRESS & LEGISLATION PROGRAMS & EVENTS WAYS TO SUPPORT NEWS LEADERSHIP AWARDS MERCHANDISE

- CFSI Update
- 2014 Headlines
- 2013 Headlines
- 2012 Headlines
- 2011 Headlines
- 2010 Headlines
- 2009 Headlines
- 2008 Headlines
- 2007 Headlines
- 2006 Headlines
- 2005 Headlines
- 2004 Headlines

NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESS VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE CONCERNS WITH THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Location: 113th

CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE / INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS / NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL

For Immediate Release
December 11, 2013

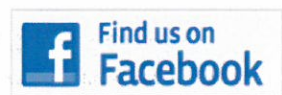
NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESS VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE CONCERNS WITH THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Washington, DC) The Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI), the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), are currently working with members of Congress and the Administration to address the potential impact that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) could have on volunteer fire departments throughout the nation.

According to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) (P.L. 111-148), employers with more than 50 full-time employees (or their equivalents (FTE)) must provide health insurance to employees that work more than 30 hours per week. Unfortunately, the Internal Revenue Service has ruled that volunteer firefighters that receive nominal benefits from their fire departments (including stipends, end-of-the-year banquets and awards) count as "employees" of fire departments. An unintended consequence of this IRS ruling is that fire departments may have to provide health insurance to volunteers that serve more than 30 hours per week at their local fire department.

The effect of this provision could cause serious financial hardship to fire departments. Many volunteer fire departments rely upon local donations and fundraisers to fund their basic operations. The addition of a requirement to provide health insurance would present a serious financial challenge to them.

Although the final regulations have not been codified, the aforementioned organizations are working with a bipartisan group of members of Congress to address this potential consequence of the PPACA.



The NVFC, IAFC, and several members of Congress have sent letters to the IRS asking Acting-Commissioner Werfel to release regulations or guidance stating volunteers who receive nominal compensation will not be considered employees under PPACA. On December 10, 2013, Senator Mark Warner (VA) and Congressman Lou Barletta (PA-11) introduced the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act (H.R. 3685 and S. 1798). The legislation ensures that volunteers are not counted as full-time employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in PPACA.

CFSI, NVFC and IAFC will continue to provide updates to the fire service as these efforts are being addressed on Capitol Hill and within the Administration. Please visit our website sites (www.cfsi.org, www.nvfc.org, www.iafc.org) for the latest information.

Contact:

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CFSI ASSOCIATES CLUB PROGRAM...why should you become a member?

- Do you believe in the importance of fire service organizations working together in Washington, DC to address the needs of all firefighters and emergency services personnel?
- Do you support the collective efforts of the major fire organizations to gain congressional approval for programs that benefit all firefighters? Programs such as the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Program, and the Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program?
- Do you believe that the fire service will continue to benefit through the active involvement of CFSI on Capitol Hill, conducting briefings and awareness programs and providing important information for members of Congress to help them understand the role and challenges of our nation's first responders?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you need to join the CFSI Associates Club Program.



CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE

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ABOUT CFSI

Whether you are a firefighter, emergency services responder, manufacturer, or are associated in another capacity with public safety, the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI) understands the important role you play in protecting our communities from the threat of fire and other dangers. With this knowledge, we communicate to Congress the challenges you face as first responders and how the federal government can best address your needs.

In our nation's capital where Pennsylvania Avenue links the White House and the U.S. Capitol, the voice of CFSI can be heard at either end. Established in 1989 as a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy institute, CFSI is designed to educate Congress about the fire and emergency services. We achieve our mission by providing an array of services and programs to engage members of Congress in fire and life safety issues. We work with all members of Congress, offering them a unique perspective on pending federal legislation – a perspective that encompasses the thoughts and understanding of the nearly 40 national fire and emergency services organizations that compose our National Advisory Committee. This committee is unique within fire and emergency services, building consensus on the most important issues addressed on Capitol Hill impacting over one million first responders in our nation.

In addition to members of Congress, CFSI communicates with Administration officials – including leaders of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, United States Fire Administration and all other federal agencies that have oversight of federal fire programs. Recognizing the Institute's role as a consensus builder, these officials often seek input from CFSI on legislative and policy initiatives. We work hard to make positive things happen in Washington, DC for the benefit of fire and life safety organizations throughout the nation.

When the Institute was first established, our mantra was, "So That First Responders Never Stand Alone." Since then, we have kept our word, fighting many battles on behalf of the public safety constituency.

HOW TO JOIN

The CFSI Associates Club Program features six levels of support. Depending on the level you select, CFSI will send you in return a package of commemorative gifts to show our appreciation for your generous contribution. Each package includes all the gifts listed in the Congressional level. CFSI will send you a renewal letter each year so you can continue to support our mission.

Congressional – \$25

- CFSI Lapel Pin
- Timeless Heroes print
- Set of three CFSI Commemorative Challenge Coins

Senate – \$50

- Congressional level gift items
- Protecting Our Nation t-shirt

Cabinet – \$100

- Congressional Level gift items
- CFSI Polo Shirt

Speaker – \$250

- Congressional level gift items
- CFSI Polo Shirt
- CFSI Tumbler

Vice Presidential – \$500

- Congressional level gift items
- CFSI Polo Shirt
- Ticket to the annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner and Seminars Program

Presidential – \$1,000

- Congressional level gift items
- Ticket to the annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner and Seminars Program
- Invitation to the CFSI Board of Directors Reception held prior to the Dinner.

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