

Resolution No. 22

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Resolutions

Re: Resolution to Recognize Kevin B. O'Connor

1 WHEREAS, Brother Kevin B. O'Connor retired
2 from the International Association of Fire Fighters
3 (IAFF) on September 30, 2017, after serving
4 honorably for over 17 years as the Assistant to the
5 General President for Governmental, Political, and
6 Public Affairs; and

7 WHEREAS, Kevin has led the IAFF's political,
8 legislative and public affairs longer than anyone in
9 IAFF history; and

10 WHEREAS, Kevin was one of the first employees
11 hired by General President Harold A. Schaitberger
12 and has been a valued senior staff member aiding in
13 the union's effort to build the clout and political
14 branding of the IAFF; and

15 WHEREAS, during his tenure, the IAFF has
16 increased IAFF FIREPAC over 600% to the point
17 where it is now one of the largest federal PACs in
18 existence and developed the trademark IAFF Gold
19 and Black as one of the most highly valued political
20 endorsements and brands in federal, state and local
21 elections; and

22 WHEREAS, the IAFF has enjoyed a legislative
23 and regulatory success that no other union has
24 achieved and is respected and welcomed by the
25 leadership in both political parties; and

26 WHEREAS, Kevin's aggressive advocacy helped
27 pave the way for the passage of such milestones as
28 the authorization of the Fire Act and SAFER Act,
29 Hometown Heroes, PSOB expansions, the Zadroga

30 9/11 Act, Hatch Act Reform, FLSA expansion, and
31 countless other initiatives, appropriations and
32 regulatory advancements; and

33 WHEREAS, Kevin became an IAFF member on
34 September 28, 1985 when he joined the Baltimore
35 County Fire Department and simultaneously Local
36 1311; and

37 WHEREAS, from 1986 to 2000, Kevin served as
38 trustee, secretary-treasurer and three terms as
39 president of the Baltimore County Professional Fire
40 Fighters Association, Local 1311 leading the
41 membership through difficult economic and political
42 times while negotiating substantial improvements to
43 health and retirement benefits and the most lucrative
44 financial contract in the local's history; and

45 WHEREAS, Kevin served as an elected trustee
46 and the first non-management employee to chair the
47 then-\$2.5 billion Baltimore County Employees'
48 Retirement System; and

49 WHEREAS, Kevin served as Legislative Agent,
50 Vice President and President of the Maryland State
51 and District of Columbia Professional Fire Fighters
52 Association, spearheading the lobbying and political
53 operations of the then-7,500-member state
54 association, successfully passing legislation to
55 eliminate residency requirements, expand
56 presumptive disability coverage, carve fire fighters
57 out of cuts to workers compensation benefits,
58 increase the state line of duty death benefits and
59 education assistance to the families of fallen fire
60 fighters and restoring collective bargaining after an
61 adverse judicial ruling; and

62 WHEREAS, Kevin attended IAFF Conventions as

63 a delegate beginning in 1988 and at various times
64 served on the IAFF Federal Fire Fighters,
65 Resolutions, Constitution and By-Laws, and chaired
66 the Credentials Committee; and

67 WHEREAS, four different Maryland Governors
68 appointed Kevin to various Senate confirmed
69 positions, including the roles of Commissioner of
70 both the Maryland Fire, Rescue, Education and
71 Training Commission and the Maryland Economic
72 Development Commission and as a Corporate
73 Director of the University of Maryland Medical
74 Systems; and

75 WHEREAS, Kevin is the only IAFF official ever
76 to chair the Congressional Fire Service Caucus
77 Advisory Board; and

78 WHEREAS, Kevin was the 2010 recipient of the
79 Motorola/Congressional Fire Service Institutes
80 Mason Langford Award for lifetime achievement in
81 the fire service; therefore be it

82 RESOLVED, That the officers, members and
83 affiliates of the IAFF express their gratitude to
84 former Assistant to the General President, current
85 active-retired member of the IAFF, and President
86 Emeritus of both the Baltimore County Professional
87 Fire Fighters Association and the Professional Fire
88 Fighters of Maryland, Kevin B. O'Connor, for his
89 lengthy and storied career serving this IAFF and his
90 brother and sister professional fire fighters and
91 paramedics on the local, state and international
92 levels; and be it further

93 RESOLVED, That the delegates at this 54th IAFF
94 Convention in Seattle, Washington celebrating the
95 centennial of our great union, congratulate Brother

96 O'Connor on his well-earned retirement and direct
97 that a framed memorial copy of this Resolution be
98 presented to Brother Kevin B. O'Connor.

Submitted by: 4th District Vice President Andrew K. Pantelis
Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland (PFFMD),
A-19

Baltimore County (MD), Local 1311
Baltimore City Fire Fighters (MD), Local 734
Baltimore City Fire Officers (MD), Local 964
Anne Arundel County (MD), Local 1563
Hagerstown (MD), Local 1605
Prince George's County (MD), Local 1619
Montgomery County (MD), Local 1664
Cumberland (MD), Local 1715
BWI Airport (MD), Local 1742
Annapolis (MD), Local 1926
Howard County (MD), Local 2000
Frederick County (MD), Local 3666
Salisbury (MD), Local 4246
Ocean City (MD), Local 4269
Cecil County (MD), Local 4645
Charles County (MD), Local 4658
Queen Anne's County (MD), Local 4886
Worcester County (MD), Local 4916
Martin State Airport (MD), Local 5044

Cost Estimate: None

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Adopt
CONVENTION ACTION: Adopted Unanimously