

Revised Resolution No. 53

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Legislative

Re: Support for National Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month

1 WHEREAS, firefighter occupational cancer is the
2 leading cause of line of duty deaths in professional
3 firefighters and has reached epidemic levels in the
4 United States; and

5 WHEREAS, in 2017, 74% of the names of fallen
6 firefighters added to the IAFF Memorial Wall of
7 Honor in Colorado Springs were attributed to
8 occupational cancers; and

9 WHEREAS, firefighters have a 9% greater
10 chance of developing cancer and a 14% greater risk
11 of dying from that cancer than the general
12 population; and

13 WHEREAS, the excess cancer risk among
14 firefighters reflects chronic exposure to known
15 carcinogens and other hazards as part of job-related
16 tasks and responsibilities; and

17 WHEREAS, current cultural norms preclude
18 firefighters and fire service leaders from consistently
19 recognizing the global scope of exposure in the fire
20 service work environment, largely due to the latency
21 periods of cancers onset and progression (5-35
22 years); and

23 WHEREAS, due to the latency period of cancer
24 diseases and continued exposure to occupational
25 contaminants will continue to adversely impact fire
26 department personnel for many years in the future;
27 And

28 WHEREAS, many departments have not yet

29 created cancer awareness programs are not operating
30 with best practices as it pertains to occupational
31 contamination and risk reduction protocols; and

32 WHEREAS, many departments do not have the
33 guidance or resources to create and implement a
34 program of firefighter contamination and risk
35 reduction procedures for cancer prevention; and

36 WHEREAS, firefighter contamination and cancer
37 risk reduction procedures are the first line of defense
38 for reducing the incidence of cancer in the fire
39 service; and

40 WHEREAS, many departments do not have the
41 necessary resources to create and implement a
42 program of cancer prevention and early detection to
43 reduce the cancer burden among their members; and

44 WHEREAS, early detection of cancer through
45 routine screening leads to earlier treatment,
46 associated with better disease outcomes, including
47 improved survival and reduced morbidity; and

48 WHEREAS, there is a need to support and
49 develop a national firefighter cancer research strategy
50 to direct future research efforts, including under-
51 represented firefighter populations of female
52 firefighters, minority firefighters, volunteer
53 firefighters, and wildland firefighters; and

54 WHEREAS, the general population needs to be
55 made aware of the cancer risk for firefighters so that
56 we can gain enough legislative support for all 50
57 states to establish a presumptive disability clause in
58 each states labor code (currently only 33 states cover
59 firefighters for one or more cancers under workers'
60 compensation as a result of presumptive legislation);
61 therefore be it

62 RESOLVED, That the IAFF support legislation
63 for a National Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month;
64 and be it further

65 RESOLVED, That the IAFF will be a leader in
66 developing partnerships and collaborations directed
67 at providing fire service personnel the training, best
68 practices, early detection and prevention programs
69 necessary to reduce occupational cancer risk; and be
70 it further

71 RESOLVED, The IAFF in conjunction with the
72 Firefighter Cancer Support Network will provide
73 scientific research, training resources and a
74 collaboration for fire service members of the country
75 to share information and best practices to reduce
76 preventable cancer risk to firefighters; and be it
77 further

78 RESOLVED, That a focused month will create
79 increased cancer awareness.

Submitted by: Orange County Professional Firefighters
 Association, Local 3631
 San Diego City Firefighters, IAFF Local 145
 Metro Broward Professional Firefighters,
 Local 3080
 Professional Firefighters and Paramedics of Palm
 Beach County, Local 2928
 Boston Firefighters, Local 718

Cost Estimate: None

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Adopt as Revised
CONVENTION ACTION: Adopted as Revised