



2025 Policy Priorities:

- **Join the Congressional Fire Services Caucus**

- **Regulatory Concern, OSHA’s Proposed Emergency Response Standard:** On February 5, 2024 the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register proposing a new safety and health standard, titled “Emergency Response.” This proposed standard suggests numerous staffing and reporting requirements that would be impossible for many small fire departments to comply with. OSHA’s most recent public comment period on this proposed standard concluded on January 17. Though the NVFC appreciates OSHA’s interest in firefighter safety we are very concerned about the economically infeasible burdens the proposed standard would place on small fire departments. **Please tell OSHA not to adopt an Emergency Response Standard that would damage the emergency response capabilities of volunteer fire departments.**

- **Legislation:**
 - **Cosponsor The FIRE STATION Act:** This bill would authorize a one-time \$750 million appropriation to help local fire and EMS agencies modify, upgrade, and build new stations and/or training facilities. This bill would allocate a minimum of 25 percent of the funding for volunteer fire and EMS departments and an additional 25 percent of the funding for competition between career, combination, and volunteer agencies. There is also a \$7.5 million cap on awards to any one agency.
 - **Cosponsor the Volunteer First Responder Housing Act:** This bill would increase access for qualified volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel to two existing federal housing assistance programs, the Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program and Good Neighbor Next Door program.
 - **Cosponsor the HERO Act:** This bill would establish a series of programs designed to address public safety behavioral health issues, including:
 - A grant program for peer-support behavioral health and wellness programs at fire and EMS departments.
 - Directing the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) in coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop and make publicly available resources to be used by the federal government and other entities to educate mental health professionals about the unique behavioral health issues that firefighters and EMS personnel face.
 - A system for collecting data on suicide deaths of public safety officers, including firefighters.
 - **Cosponsor the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act:** This bill would expand access to Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) for the families of first responders, including firefighters, who pass away from cancer caused by carcinogenic exposure during their service. This bill would also extend disability benefits in cases where first responders become permanently and totally disabled due to cancer.

For Additional Information or Questions:

Please Contact the National Volunteer Fire Council’s Chief of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, Ryan Woodward, if you have any questions or require additional information. Ryan can be reached at Ryan@NVFC.org.