



2026 NVFC 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 proposed Emergency Response Standard. 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. OSHA’s most recent public comment period on this proposed standard concluded on January 17, 2025. OSHA is now reviewing the public input it received. **Please urge OSHA to adopt an Emergency Response Standard that is economically feasible and workable in the volunteer fire service and does the following: 1) removes NFPA standards that are incorporated by reference, 2) recommends local risk management and hazard mitigation plans are tailored to the vastly different local hazards each department encounters, 3) removes fire departments serving communities of 5000 residents or fewer.**

- **Legislation:**
 - **Cosponsor The FIRE STATION Act, when it is reintroduced:** 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, when it is reintroduced:** 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 (H.R. 1902):** 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, like firefighters.
 - **First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet):** FirstNet was established at the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission Report to develop the first and only nationwide, high-speed broadband network dedicated to public safety. FirstNet has accomplished this goal via a highly successful public private partnership. The FirstNet Authority is scheduled to sunset on February 22, 2027. On April 20, 2026 the House passed H.R.7386, the First Responder Network Authority Reauthorization Act, which would reauthorize the FirstNet Authority through 2037. **Please support Senate passage of H.R. 7386 or the passage of similar Senate legislation to ensure that the FirstNet Authority does not sunset in February 2027.**

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.