Fire service needs are extensive for firefighters of Departments, career or volunteer, and of all sizes in every area, including staffing, training, facilities, apparatus, personal protective equipment (PPE), and health and wellness. Overall, the smaller the community protected, the greater the need. Findings such as these are important to fire departments throughout New Jersey as they examine their anticipated budgets for Fiscal year 2017.

"Needs Assessment Survey of the US Fire Service"

Key findings from the report include the following statistics:

◊ Forty-nine percent of all fire departments have not formally trained all of their personnel involved in structural firefighting, up from 46 percent in 2010.

◊ Sixty-nine percent of departments reported that some of their self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment is at least 10 years old, up from 55 percent in 2010.

◊ More than two-thirds (72 percent) of departments reported that some of their PPE clothing is at least 10 years old, up from 63 percent in 2010.

◊ Two out of five fire stations (43 percent) are at least 40 years old, up from 32 percent in 2001, when the initial needs assessment survey was conducted.

◊ Forty-three percent of all fire department engines and pumpers are at least 15 years old, down from 51 percent in 2001.
Only one quarter (27 percent) of fire departments have a basic firefighter fitness and health program, slightly down from 30 percent in 2010.

In September 2015, the Needs Assessment survey was sent out to all US fire departments.

The intent of the survey was to capture the level of fire department resources and staffing, determine where fire departments have the resources to meet the needs of their communities, and identify gaps.

The full "Needs Assessment of the U.S. Fire Service" report is now available online. Click the image below.
Conference Coordinator Charles Lavin kicks off the 14th Annual conference by welcoming participants and thanking all those who made the event possible.

Professionals from well beyond New Jersey participate in the lecture series and networking opportunities.

Conference speakers take time to interact with attendees over mid-morning and early afternoon breaks and lunch; an excellent time to interact with peers.
Joe Erhard delivers a moving tribute to Andy Bragg who passed this year acknowledged as the driving force behind the bid to assist troubled youth. He brought fire, law enforcement and social welfare segments together for one unified effort to deal with the serious and enduring problem of youth using fire as a manifestation of their cry for help and of serious concern to all of us.

New Jersey Fire Safety Commissioner, and Chair of the Youth Firesetter Advisory Council Kathleen Lynch, accepts the annual Paul Hartstein Award for the leadership she has provided to the Council during her tenure as Chair over the years.

Representatives from the FDNY take what they learn back home. We are glad they were able to attend.
Volunteer firefighters represent 69 percent of the US Fire Service (Hayes & Stein 2016). As a nation we rely on them every day to save lives and to protect property in times of danger and disaster. In order to do so they must first be healthy, safe and able to respond.

Firefighters are hurt and/or die from a number of health and occupational safety issues, such as heart attack, cancer and vehicle crashes.

A fundamental change is needed to overturn these issues and revolutionize the volunteer and emergency services to create healthier and safer work environments for volunteer responders.

(from the report)
The NJDFS supported the local observation of NFPA National Fire Prevention Week throughout the state by distributing smoke alarms for Operation Save-A-Life, officially kicking off the 2016-17 NJFPPA-NJDFS Calendar-Poster Contest, and, as with hundreds of other departments, hosting on site public education visits, all with the NFPA theme in mind “Don’t Wait Check the Date!”
This space is not large enough to encompass all the accomplishments of Bill Kramer, though among them is evidence that he worked tirelessly to leave the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety better than he found it. His tenure began at the original Office of the State Fire Marshal, at the Division of Law and Public Safety in 1983, before the Division was formed. Bill will these efforts for the Philadelphia school district. Testament to his tenure were the number of tearful farewells he received on his last day. If you ever needed a smile and an encouraging word, Bill always had one for you, and for that matter anyone who asked. His deep knowledge of the Code and of firefighting were acknowledged by all.

His professionalism, his charm and grace will be greatly missed by many.
(Editor’s note: The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety has formed a working group arising out of the NJ Firefighter Health and Safety Summit held this past summer with Vision 20/20 representative Tony Correia to identify solutions to those very issues.)

(From IAFC)
Firefighting is physically taxing, dangerous and stressful; the guide provides both the context and information needed to improve the medical testing and treatment of firefighters by their personal private primary care providers.

The free Healthcare Provider’s Guide to Firefighter Physicals is available for you to bring to your physician to help them understand the physiological demands of firefighting and the resulting health risks research shows firefighters are most prone to. The best way to diminish the effects of any diseases, illnesses or injuries is to detect them as early as possible.

The Guide assists primary care providers in the evaluation, treatment and ongoing surveillance of the unique health and wellness needs of firefighters. Its medical recommendations are research-supported and experience-driven. It was written by physicians, healthcare professionals, researchers and fire service experts experienced in evaluating and treating firefighters. The concise format and well thought out content is continuously well received by physicians looking for information on the health needs of firefighters and those that

This is especially true for firefighters who, in many cases, are at greater risk for certain diseases, illnesses, and injuries than the general population.

The best way to find these diseases, illnesses and injuries early is for healthcare providers to have an increased awareness and for firefighters to have annual physicals that can catch abnormalities early.

This guide is for any firefighter, whether career or volunteer, whether your department provides annual physicals or not. Help improve your personal private primary care provider’s understanding of your unique firefighter healthcare needs. Bring the guide to your next annual physical exam. Get Checked. Survive.

The Guide was produced by the International Association of Fire Chiefs through its research arm, Firefighter Safety Through Advanced Research and the IAFC Firefighter Safety and Health Section.

GET THE GUIDE HERE

PHYSICALS NOT MANDATORY BUT REQUIRED FOR ON-THE-JOB FIREFIGHTER SURVIVAL
New Jersey Weekend 2017 presents an opportunity to interact with peers from career and volunteer departments across New Jersey, in a collegial setting located in Emmitsburg, Maryland at the National Fire Academy.

In addition to classroom training from the renown Academy faculty, is the return of the annual memorial for the fallen among New Jersey firefighters.

Click the above graphic to register at the Kean University Fire Safety Training site and do so early as the limited slots fill up quickly.

Kent Neiswender
New Jersey drivers know that (NJSA 39:4-92.2) requires the above when emergency responders are nearby. Coming soon to a smart car near you may be advance warning of just when to do that.

Every driver has likely experienced the mini-heart attack after looking in the rearview mirror and seeing a fire engine or ambulance blaring its siren mere feet behind the vehicle. Typically, the driver veers off to the shoulder as quickly as possible and waits until the emergency vehicle passes.

This problem can be exacerbated when cars go through intersections and if other drivers are unable to hear or see the oncoming emergency vehicles. This is often where emergency vehicles can experience accidents causing a slowdown in response time and millions of dollars in repairs.

Cities have been looking into private-sector solutions to identify solutions to the problem. Grand Rapids, Mich., and Palo Alto, Calif., have working partnerships with Heedful Audio Alert System Alert (HAAS), a startup that is using mobile data to alert drivers of upcoming emergency vehicles in real time through V2V (vehicle-to-vehicle) notifications.

Along with sending push notifications to drivers and cyclists, HAAS offers a dashboard of safety statistics including live fleet management tools and response rate analytics.

(from Government Technology)
BEST LIVE TREE
SAFETY MESSAGE EVER.
POST IT ON YOUR
SOCIAL MEDIA SITE

View the landmark National Institute of Standards and Technology live tree burn.
Click the photo to link to it during the post Holiday period.
FIRE LEGISLATION BEFORE THE 115th CONGRESS

PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS’ BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT
S. 2944 was introduced by Senator Charles Grassley (IA) on May 18, 2016.
Summary: The legislation improves the timeliness and transparency in the Justice Department’s processing of PSOB death, disability, and educational assistance claims.

NATIONAL MITIGATION INVESTMENT ACT
H.R. 5177 was introduced by Congressman Carlos Curbelo (FL-26) on May 10, 2016.
Summary: The legislation incentivizes states to adopt state-wide model building codes and creates a grant program to assist states and localities in enforcing those building codes.

HONORING EMERGENCY RESPONSE OFFICERS (HERO) BENEFITS REFORM ACT
H.R. 5123 was introduced by Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9) on April 29, 2016.
Summary: The legislation improves timeliness and transparency in the Justice Department’s processing of PSOB death, disability, and educational assistance claims, and clarifies that fire police and fire investigators are public safety officers for the purposes of the Public Safety Officers’ Benefits (PSOB) program.

FIREFIGHTER CANCER REGISTRY ACT
H.R. 4625 was introduced by Congressman Richard Hanna (NY-22) on February 25, 2016.
S. 2799 was introduced by Senator Robert Menendez (NJ) on April 14, 2016.
Summary: The legislation creates a specialized national registry to provide researchers and epidemiologists with the tools and resources they need to improve research collection activities related to the monitoring of cancer incidence among firefighters.

PROTECTING PATIENT ACCESS TO EMERGENCY MEDICATIONS ACT OF 2016
H.R. 4365 was introduced by Congressman Richard Hudson (NC-8) on January 12, 2016.
Summary: The legislation clarifies existing law to allow EMS providers to continue dispensing controlled substances under “standing orders”.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT
H.R. 2029 was originally introduced as the Fiscal Year 2016 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act by Congressman Charles Dent (PA-15) on April 24, 2015.
Summary: The bill fund programs and activities of the federal government for Fiscal Year 2016. Note: H.R. 2029 was signed into law on December 18, 2015.

FIRE SPRINKLER INCENTIVE ACT
H.R. 3591 was introduced by Congressman Tom Reed (NY-23) on September 22, 2015.
S. 2068 was introduced by Senator Susan Collins (ME) on September 22, 2015.
Summary: The legislation amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include automated fire sprinkler systems as section 179 property and classify certain automated fire sprinkler systems as 15-year property for purposes of depreciation.

NICHOLAS AND ZACHARY BURT MEMORIAL CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING PREVENTION ACT
H.R. 4701 was introduced on April 14, 2015 by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (NY-12).
Summary: The legislation establishes a federal grant program to assist states in carrying out CO education programs.

JAMES ZADROGA 9/11 HEALTH AND COMPENSATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT
S. 928 was introduced on April 14, 2015 by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (NY).
H.R. 1786 was introduced on April 14, 2015 by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (NY-12).
SAFE BUILDING CODES INCENTIVE ACT
H.R. 1748 was introduced on April 13, 2015 by Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25).
Summary: The bill provides additional funding for post-disaster grants, under a program administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to states that adopt and enforce state-wide building codes.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT
S. 420 was introduced on February 20, 2015 by Senator Pat Toomey (PA).
H.R. 2658 was introduced on June 4, 2015 by Congressman Lou Barletta (PA-11).
Summary: The legislation ensures that volunteers are not counted as full-time employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

VOLUNTEER RESPONDER INCENTIVE PROTECTION ACT
S. 609 was introduced on February 27, 2015 by Senator Charles Schumer (NY).
H.R. 2752 was introduced on June 12, 2015 by Congressman John Larson (CT-1).
Summary: The legislation exempts from federal income tax any property tax benefit and up to $600 per year of any other type of benefit that a state or local unit of government provides to volunteer emergency responders as a recruitment or retention incentive.

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT
S. 616 was introduced on February 27, 2015 by Senator Susan Collins (ME).
H.R. 1171 was introduced on February 27, 2015 by Congressman Peter King (NY-2).
Summary: The legislation modifies the federal tax code to make it easier for fire departments and local governments to provide recruitment and retention incentive to volunteer emergency response personnel through length of service award programs (LOSAPs).

FEDERAL FIREFIGHTERS FAIRNESS ACT
H.R. 1035 was introduced on February 24, 2015 by Congresswoman Lois Capps (CA-24).
Summary: The legislation amends federal law to create a rebuttable presumption that heart disease, lung disease, specified cancers and infectious diseases contracted by federal firefighters are job-related and contracted in the line-of-duty for purposes of worker’s compensation and disability retirement.

FALLEN HEROES FLAG ACT
H.R. 723 was introduced by Congressman Peter King (NY-2) on February 4, 2015.
S. 2755 was introduced by Senator Roy Blunt (MO) on April 6, 2016.
Summary: The legislation allows the Representative of the immediate family of a deceased public safety officer who died in the line of duty to provide the family, at their request, with a Capitol-flown flag, together with a certificate, signed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Representative providing the flag, which contains an expression of sympathy for the family. NOTE: S. 2755 was signed into law on May 16, 2016.
(From CFSI)
### AT ISSUE:
Pending Fire Service Bills

<click bill number to search>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assembly</th>
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⇒ Click here for your State Senator and Assemblyman
⇒ Find your Federal Representative
In memoriam

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