



ILLINOIS FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to excellence in the Fire Service

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March 29, 2019

To: Illinois Fire Chiefs Association Membership; John Swan, President Illinois Firefighters Association; Margaret Vaughn IFA Lobbyist; Nicholas Kosiara President Northern Illinois Alliance of Fire Protection Districts; Mike Dillon President Illinois Fire Protection Districts

From: Chief Mark J. Puknaitis
President Illinois Fire Chiefs Association,
IFCA Board Presidents

Dear Members and Affiliates:

I am writing this letter due to recent legislative developments concerning Senate Bill 37 which pertains to firefighters that work a secondary employment at another fire agency part-time and a proposed legislation that would call for a contribution to the pension fund of the primary fire agency that the firefighter is employed. Yesterday, I was made aware of a letter (attached) that was sent from Margaret Vaughn who is a lobbyist for the Illinois Firefighters Association (IFA) stating that *"Unfortunately the IFCA did not officially oppose the bill in Committee and despite repeated requests from their own membership to not offer concessions in negotiations that would hurt their own members, they did just that."*

I am writing this letter to clarify and indicate the facts of this issue to our members and anyone else that it concerns. The IFCA has been actively working with legislators, the AFFI and lobbyists to work together to finalize the least restrictive language to this legislation for all whom it would apply. This bill was and currently is poised to include any unit of local government of 5000 or more inhabitants to be passed as it is written without negotiations which would call for a 17½% employer and 9.45% employee pension contribution to all firefighters who would be working part-time at a secondary fire agency. Furthermore, the bill requires the State Comptroller to intercept State funds in the event the unit of local government does not make its contribution to the primary employer's downstate pension fund. It also amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement.

The lobbyist from the IFA is suggesting that the association she represents take on this fight to oppose the bill without any negotiations to relax the ramifications currently underlined and mandated under the current language.

The IFCA had multiple meetings with the bill sponsoring Senator and has addressed this issue at each of its weekly legislative committee conference calls. The IFCA has discussed this bill in some fashion over the past four years. The IFCA requested to sit with the Senator to discuss and negotiate the bill in good faith. The Senator invited us to meet and proceed with negotiations.

This bill was just recently passed through legislative committee with a 9-1 vote and will continue its way through the legislative process with or without negotiations. The IFCA will always strive to achieve what is best for the overall membership as diversity and communications are two of the strategic goals that

are adhered to. To even remotely accuse the IFCA of doing something to hurt their own membership is insulting and flat out incorrect!

We currently have an opportunity to continue to negotiate the language and propose new language that will be less costly and potentially exclude certain classes of firefighting personnel and fire agencies or we can move ahead with the decision proposed by the IFA to oppose the bill without negotiation.

The IFA has a decision to make:

1. Apologize for the negative letter and support the IFCA in moving ahead with a negotiated language proposal for SB37

Or

2. Stand firm on the opposition of SB37 which the IFCA will not support without negotiations and attempt to defeat this bill.

As your President, I strongly urge you to take option #1. I will allow a response to be sent to the IFCA Executive Director James Grady no later than Monday April 8, 2019. If no response is received, I will presume that option #2 is the decision and the IFCA will take a neutral position on this bill. If Option #2 is taken, the IFCA will not accept any responsibility for the ramifications imposed by this bill becoming law.

The actions expressed in this letter carry the full support of the entire IFCA Executive Board as witnessed by the below signatures.

Respectfully,



Mark J. Puknaitis
President Illinois Fire Chiefs' Association
Fire Chief Naperville Fire Department



Greg Earle
IFCA 1st Vice President



Don Shoevlin
IFCA 2nd Vice President



John Christian
IFCA Immediate Past President

cc: file

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Illinois Firefighter's Association, Inc. <editor@illinoisfirefighters.org>

Date: Thu, Mar 28, 2019, 5:27 PM

Subject: Oppose SB37

File witness slips on Fireworks Bills

[View this email in your browser](#)



TO: IFA Members and Friends

From: Margaret Vaughn, IFA Lobbyist 217-280-0206

Thanks to the 116 fire officials who registered their opposition to SB 37 and for Tinley Park Chief Forest Reeder who provided testimony and participated in the Stakeholders meeting. We also appreciate IFA Board member Roger Agpawa coming down with 6 chiefs and Deputies to show their opposition and help lobby against it.

Unfortunately the IFCA did not officially oppose the bill in Committee and despite repeated requests from their own membership to not offer concessions in negotiations that would hurt their own members, they did just that. In the Stakeholder Meeting yesterday, IFCA lobbyist offered a proposal so that the legislation would apply anything a firefighter earned annually after the first \$20,000 from their secondary employer.

Our question for you is how much on average do your part-time or POC firefighters earn annually?

In the meantime, reach out to your state senator and let them know you oppose SB 37, secondary employer pension bill. All senators can be reached through the state operator at 217-782-2000.

Thanks!

Margaret

Please share with your department and neighboring departments

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