

Resolution No. 31

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Occupational Health & Safety Re: PFAS

1 WHEREAS, when firefighters engage in active
2 fire suppression activities, they know the dangers
3 associated with their job; and

4 WHEREAS, new research now suggests
5 firefighters are at risk before they ever leave the
6 firehouse just wearing their turnout gear; and

7 WHEREAS, medical evidence exists that proves
8 that firefighters face disproportionate rates of cancer
9 than the general public; and

10 WHEREAS, exposure to polyfluoroalkyl
11 substances, known as PFAS, has been proven to
12 increase the occurrence of cancers including
13 testicular, prostate, mesothelioma, and non-
14 Hodgkin's lymphoma; and

15 WHEREAS, firefighting PPE manufacturers are
16 not required to disclose the chemicals used in the
17 manufacturing process; and

18 WHEREAS, studies have shown that PFAS in the
19 outer shell of firefighting PPE may be dislodged
20 when the material is manipulated, increasing the
21 concern of ingestion or inhalation; and

22 WHEREAS, University of Notre Dame
23 Experimental Nuclear Physics Professor Graham
24 Peaslee is testing new and used personal protective
25 gear issued through the 2000s for the presence of
26 perfluorinated alkyl substances; and

27 WHEREAS, Peaslee said the initial results from
28 tested PPE fabric swatches were "phenomenal,"

29 “(The results were) off the scale in parts per million
30 of fluorine in all but one of the samples,” he said and
31 continued, “Everything was just loaded with
32 fluorine.”; and

33 WHEREAS, his research is helping our members
34 to learn more about how our turnout gear could be a
35 major cause of occupational cancers; and

36 WHEREAS, current bunker gear manufacturers
37 continue to deny the potential for any health
38 problems created by their use of PFAS; therefore be
39 it

40 RESOLVED, That the IAFF actively oppose the
41 use of PFAS, in any amount, in the production of
42 firefighting PPE; and be it further

43 RESOLVED, That the IAFF seek further
44 independent testing of all PPE ensembles currently
45 available to determine the levels of PFAS and the
46 ability of the PFAS to penetrate the skin; and be it
47 further

48 RESOLVED, That the IAFF meet with each
49 manufacturer of firefighting PPE and demand
50 cooperation and assistance to immediately cease the
51 use of PFAS in firefighting PPE, and the IAFF shall
52 send a notice to each local affiliate, identifying any
53 and all manufacturers refusing to immediately cease
54 the use of PFAS; and be it further

55 RESOLVED, That the IAFF meet with each
56 manufacturer of firefighting PPE and demand
57 cooperation and assistance to fund a study and data
58 collection of the negative health effects of PFAS in
59 firefighting PPE; and be it further

60 RESOLVED, That the IAFF Health and Safety
61 Committee give quarterly updates to the District Vice

62 Presidents so that information may be disseminated
63 to their local affiliates.

Submitted by: IAFF Local 765, Fort Lauderdale
 IAFF Local 3080, Metro-Broward Professional
 Fire Fighters
 IAFF Local 1365, Orlando Professional Fire
 Fighters

Cost Estimate:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

CONVENTION ACTION: