

Pine Creek Volunteer Fire Department

18656 Route 322

Brookville, PA 15825

Good Afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to let me speak in favor of House Bill 759

My name is Don Pangallo and I'm the Fire Chief of the Pine Creek Volunteer Fire Department, in Jefferson County, I have been in the fire service for 27 years and I have been Fire Chief for 11 years.

The Pine Creek Volunteer Fire Department Responds to an average of 230-250 Emergency alarms each year. The biggest majority of these alarms are for vehicle accidents, and many of those are on Interstate 80.

My Department operates on an annual budget of \$250,000. We are blessed to have good support from the Two Townships we cover, but our volunteers still have to raise over \$160,000 each year to be able to provide the services that we offer.

On average it costs my Department around \$500 to respond to each alarm when factoring in the cost of fuel and equipment per call. When responding to large scale incidents this can be much higher. For alarms involving hazardous material we have seen our cost for absorbents sometimes reach \$5000.

This year, we have responded to 197 alarms so far with 64 of those on Interstate 80, costing my Department well over \$40,000.

As of today we have recovered \$2400 of these costs from insurance companies that have been billed for reimbursement.

These are trucking companies and travelers from out of our area that never contribute to our local taxes or department donations. However the Fire Departments responding to these alarms across the state receive no additional funding, and are forced to pass the liability onto our own municipalities and local residents.

We need a way to make insurance companies and trucking companies to be held liable for the costs incurred due to accidents.

The volunteer crisis in this state is highly fueled by the amount of fund raising we have to do in order to survive.

I highly support House bill 759 and any legislation to help Volunteer Fire Departments continue to help serve and protect our commonwealth.

Thank You.