

# PENNSYLVANIA PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

301 Chestnut Street • Suite 101 • Harrisburg, PA 17101



717-221-8800 office

[www.ppffa.org](http://www.ppffa.org)

717-221-8488 fax

**DAVE CHIARAMONTE**  
President

**J. T. PENNINGTON**  
Secretary Treasurer

**KEVIN RESSLER**  
Recording Secretary

February 18, 2020

Good afternoon. Thank you Chairman Farry, Chairman Sainato and the members of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee. I am Dave Chiamonte, President of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association and retired Fire Lieutenant from the City of Erie.

The work that has been conducted by this committee shows a commitment to fire protection, one of the core governmental responsibilities.

Currently, minimum levels of training and certification vary greatly from municipality to municipality and from department to department. This must change. There is no such thing as a routine fire. The materials within our homes, businesses and vehicles burn at hotter temperatures and create an extremely toxic atmosphere. This causes conditions within a burning structure to degrade rapidly and training is paramount to keeping firefighters and the citizens we serve safe.

It is the position of the PPFFA that the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner should have always had the authority to implement and enforce minimum certification levels for firefighters, including those that serve our airports, the Aircraft Rescue Firefighters (ARFF) within the Commonwealth. It appears that HB 1819 aims to do just that.

Members of the Legislature have asked the PPFFA for basic input about regionalization and standards of coverage in their Districts. We always welcome discussion on firefighting issues, it is our belief that this should not be a "bottom up" approach, but rather the Commissioner should advise and develop appropriate standards of coverage.

After looking at the membership of the proposed Fire Commission, we would like to see guaranteed representation on the Commission. Many municipalities are struggling to provide fire protection to their citizens. It is in the interest of the citizens of the municipalities, that we request a seat on this Commission as we currently sit on the Fire Service Advisory Committee.

Sincerely,

David A. Chiamonte

PPFFA President

(814) 873-3299

[dchiamonte@ppffa.org](mailto:dchiamonte@ppffa.org)