

Collective Bargaining: Priority Number One

Whereas, the ability of employees to engage in collective bargaining provides a voice in the workplace and improves standards of living for workers and their families, and

Whereas, workers in the private sector were guaranteed collect bargaining rights by the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA)in 1935; and

Whereas, fire fighters and other public employees are not covered under the National Labor Relations Act; and

Whereas, for over fifty years IAFF affiliates have worked to enact collective bargaining laws at the state and local level; and

Whereas, beginning in the late 1950s, the IAFF began advocating for a national collective bargaining law for fire fighters and introduced comprehensive legislation in the 1970s that mirrored rights afforded under the NLRA; and

Whereas, IAFF affiliates joined together to form the Southern Federation of Fire Fighters with the goal of generating internal and external support for enacting a national collective bargaining law, and

Whereas, delegates at the 42nd Biennial Convention in Detroit established collective bargaining as the IAFF's top legislative priority and created a standing committee, the Committee to Assist Non-Collective Bargaining States, to support that effort, and

Whereas, in 1995, the IAFF first introduced the Public Safety Employer/Employee Cooperation Act (PSEECA) which would have provided collective bargaining and organizing rights to jurisdictions without a state or local law while protecting and grandfathering existing laws; and

Whereas, the PSEECA was introduced in every Congress through 2010 and over the course of time the measure generated sufficient bi-partisan support with over half of Congress signing on as co-sponsors; and

Whereas, versions of the PSEECA passed both the House and Senate on multiple occasions; and

Whereas, in the 111th Congress, PSEECA was killed by a filibuster in the lame duck session; and

Whereas, as a result of the 2010 elections, the political dynamic changed in both Congress and State Houses across the country and attacks on unions, labor rights and collective bargaining became the rallying cry for right-wing, anti-union politicians, and

Whereas, with an unfavorable Congress, the IAFF pivoted and began pursuing measures, such as ballot initiatives and referenda, to expand collective bargaining; and

Whereas, the need still exists to ensure that every professional fire fighters is afforded collective bargaining rights and is covered under a union contract; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the IAFF introduce federal legislation beginning in the 115th Congress to provide all professional fire fighters with collective bargaining rights without diminishing any rights currently provided by state and local jurisdictions; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the IAFF view the passage of a comprehensive national collective bargaining law as a long range endeavor and recognizes that it may be necessary to pursue intermediate steps and legislation, included but not limited to, a fire fighter's bill of rights, political citizenship rights, private rights of action and free speech protections, to build momentum and support for ultimate success; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the IAFF continue to assist affiliates in their efforts of expanding bargaining rights at the state and local levels; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the 53rd IAFF Convention re-affirms national collective bargaining as the union's number one legislative priority.

Respectfully submitted by the Greater Kansas City Fire Fighters IAFF Local No. 42, of the International Association of Fire Fighters,




WILLIAM GALVIN

President

IAFF Local No. 42

Signed on May 24, 2016



GARY REESE

Secretary Treasurer

IAFF Local No. 42

Signed on May 24, 2016