

**CONGRESSIONAL FIRE SERVICES INSTITUTE / FIRE APPARATUS MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION /
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANUFACTURERS AND SERVICES ASSOCIATION /
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS / INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS /
NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION / NATIONAL VOLUNTEER FIRE COUNCIL**

November 17, 2017

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Majority Leader, House of Representatives
H-107, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the nation's fire and emergency services, we urge you to bring S. 829, the AFG and SAFER Program Reauthorization Act, to the House floor for consideration at the earliest possible opportunity. S. 829, approved by unanimous consent by the Senate on August 2nd, reauthorizes the highly successful Assistance to Firefighters (AFG), Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) and Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grant programs.

Congress created these grant programs to address the baseline needs of our nation's fire and emergency services. While the programs have demonstrated considerable success in addressing the needs, the data indicates that thousands of fire departments across the nation still lack the necessary training, equipment, and staffing to respond to over 30 million emergency calls annually, and work to reduce community risk.

For over a year, our organizations have communicated ideas for reauthorization legislation with the authorizing committees in both the House and Senate. The language in S. 829 captures the key recommendations we developed and have shared with committee staff in both chambers. The changes we seek, contained in the Senate measure, will only strengthen the grant programs, thereby benefiting the response capabilities of our nation's 30,000 fire departments.

Every community across the country relies on our firefighters to respond to a variety of emergency situations, including structure fires, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, technical rescue, and wildland/urban interface fires. These grant programs improve the response capabilities in each of these emergency response areas, and provide funding for fire prevention and safety programs targeted toward high-risk populations.

Unfortunately, the authorization for these programs expired on September 30th. Of greater concern is a sunset provision that will eliminate the programs if Congress fails to act before January 2, 2018. We urge the House to reauthorize these programs without delay.

We remain grateful for your continued leadership in ensuring that America's fire and emergency services are prepared to protect the public from all hazards – both natural and manmade. We look forward to working with you as House moves forward with reauthorizing these important programs.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the nation's fire service and best wishes on your continued success and safety.

Sincerely,

Congressional Fire Services Institute
Fire Apparatus Manufacturers' Association
Fire and Emergency Manufacturers and Services Association
International Association of Fire Chiefs
International Association of Fire Fighters
National Fire Protection Association
National Volunteer Fire Council