

MARYLAND STATE FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

REPRESENTING THE VOLUNTEER FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMS PERSONNEL OF MARYLAND.



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HB468: Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland

My name is Robert Phillips, I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA). The MSFA represents the 25,000 plus volunteer Fire/EMS and Rescue first responders across the state.

I wish to present testimony in favor with amendment of House Bill468:
Commission to Advance Lithium-Ion Battery Safety in Maryland

The MSFA supports this bill. The Lithium-ion battery has been with us for around 30 years now. The primary use has been to power our small rechargeable devices. Manufacturers are now using this technology to power our motor vehicles and to store electric energy from solar arrays. With the increasing use of these larger storage systems comes new areas of concern. For the fire service it is an issue of how do we safely respond, contain and suppress a fire emergency. For the environment how do we use and properly dispose of the materials after they have been taken out of service. This commission will be directed to look into these and other issues and recommend guidelines for us to use in the future. The MSFA would like the bill amended to include a representative from the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute (MFRI). MFRI is the leading educator of the volunteer fire service in the State of Maryland and should be a part of the commission. At some point, education will have to be a part of the conversation as to safe practices needed to respond and protect the public, property and the environment. The MSFA believes including MFRI at the beginning would be the best way to accomplish this.

I thank the committee for their time and attention to this important bill and ask that you vote favorable on House Bill468.

I will now be glad to answer any questions, or my contact information is listed above and welcome any further inquiries you might have.