



Career Fire Fighters Association of Frederick County, MD Inc.
International Association of Fire Fighters Local 3666
Affiliated with:
Maryland State Professional Fire Fighters Association and The Central Maryland Labor Council / AFL-CIO



SUPPORT

HB 532: Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information
Sponsored by: Delegate Solomon **Government, Labor, and Elections Committee**
Hearing 2/19 at 1:00 p.m.

Dear Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

I write as the President of the Career Firefighters Association of Frederick County, Maryland (IAFF Local 3666) - Frederick County's public employee organization that represents the over 600 men and women employed with the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue. I am writing to express my support for HB532.

The House of Delegates has previously approved this legislation in 2025 with a near-unanimous vote. Four jurisdictions are impacted prospectively by this legislation (Howard, Frederick, and Montgomery Counties and Baltimore City); **current bargaining agreements are not impacted**. This legislation should be passed soon in order to provide these counties with an opportunity to budget and plan when these agreements expire.

We must recognize and support the sacrifices made by our public safety personnel and standardizing the work hours in a work week (42 hours a week) is a matter of fairness. This legislation is a proactive measure to improve health and safety for firefighters and is necessary step forward for Maryland to recognize the increasingly important role of paid personnel in our local jurisdictions. As we grow, we must modernize our practices. HB532 was designed to offer a way forward that benefits the residents we serve, the firefighters we seek to retain, and the Counties and municipalities that employ us.

Specifically, passing this legislation is an important step toward accountability and a move to extend workplace protections that are currently afforded to other Maryland workers. Claims from MACo that this somehow ends bargaining authority or undermines firefighting operations should be challenged and exposed for being untrue.

Our employer, Frederick County, continues to respond to this legislation with varying over-inflated accounting that are supposed to scare Maryland legislators from passing this legislation:

- in 2026 we've been told this legislation will necessitate hiring 150 more firefighters and cost \$20 million,
- in 2025 they said it would mean hiring nearly 100 more employees; and,
- In 2024 they said it would mean hiring 50 more firefighters.

We challenge the County to provide a public accounting of these dramatic claims: these numbers simply don't pass the reasonableness test: we haven't hired that many firefighters over the past two years. How have the numbers tripled?

We agree that by taking action to pass this bill this year, we can plan for any staffing needs for our future. Nothing in this legislation requires changes in work schedules. Instead, this legislation sets a minimum for what should be considered a work week. For these reasons, IAFF Local 3666 respectfully urges a favorable report on HB532.