

AFG AND SAFER APPROPRIATIONS

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) programs are imperative to addressing the needs of more than one million fire and emergency services personnel.

Background

Every community relies on firefighters to respond to a variety of emergency situations, including:

- structure fires,
- emergency medical services,
- hazardous materials response,
- wildland/urban interface fires, and
- much more.

Demand for fire and emergency services response has continued to grow. From 2014-2024, the number of fire department calls increased by 35% to more than 42 million calls.

Demand for AFG and SAFER funding continues to grow as costs for turnout gear and fire apparatus increase while budgets stagnate.

In FY2024, AFG received almost 12 times more in requests than could be funded. AFG received nearly \$4 billion in requests with just \$324 million in available funding.

Ask

- ▶ Provide \$405 million for both the AFG and SAFER programs in the FY27 appropriations cycle.
- ▶ The FEMA Administrator shall provide the relevant waivers for AFG and SAFER.

Talking Points

▶ Ensuring Community Safety

Increased funding for AFG and SAFER helps ensure that fire departments are adequately staffed and equipped, improving overall public safety in both urban and rural areas.

▶ Boosting Disaster Preparedness

It is in the federal government's best interests to ensure communities are prepared to respond to disasters.

Adequate funding for AFG and SAFER supports firefighter training and readiness, equipping them to handle natural disasters, hazardous materials incidents, and large-scale emergencies, ensuring communities are better prepared for crises.

▶ Protecting Local Economies

Well-funded fire departments are essential for the economic stability of communities, as they protect businesses, infrastructure, and homes from fire-related damages, fostering a secure environment for economic growth.

▶ Firefighter Health & Safety

More funding allows fire departments to invest in modern equipment, training, and protective gear, thereby reducing injuries, fatalities, and long-term health risks for firefighters.

