



**UNIFORMED
PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR 2022 Candidates

Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone number: _____

The International Association of Fire Fighters chartered the Uniformed Professional Fire Fighters Association of Connecticut in 1946. Presently, the U.P.F.F.A. of CT represents more than 70 local unions of the IAFF in Connecticut, more than 4,000 union Fire Fighters. The Uniformed Professional Fire Fighters Association advocates fire service issues and public safety interests before the Administrative and Legislative branches of Connecticut State Government.

We are committed professionals that care deeply about our communities. This passion and dedication is reflected in the constant interaction with the public. Professional Fire Fighters realize we cannot provide for the safety of our citizens alone. We need strong advocates for our life saving work at all levels of government. We are committed to supporting candidates for office who share our commitment to the Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) needs of the public.

Should you need additional information about the following issues and questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact Jeff Tomchik below.

Please email the completed questionnaire to:

Jeffrey Tomchik
Director of Legislative and Political Affairs
Cell: 203-449-6972 or e-mail: jtomchik801@gmail.com

Please note that the deadline for submitting a questionnaire will be June 30th

UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

Candidate Name _____ Office sought _____

*(Please HIGHLIGHT appropriate answer for **ALL QUESTIONS**)*

1. Collective bargaining and binding arbitration are constantly under attack. In a January 2006 OLR report: Binding Arbitration-Municipal and School Employees, OLR found that Arbiters ruled in favor of management 61% of the time on all issues, 59% for management on wages, and 69% for management on health care. Based upon these facts:

Would you not only support collective bargaining and binding arbitration, but would you speak in public in defense of and further advocate for collective bargaining and binding arbitration rights for all workers?

Please highlight your answers

1A. Support

1B. Speak in FAVOR

2. Cancer has become a very serious issue facing Firefighters today. Firefighters are four times more likely to develop specific cancers than the general public. This is due to the chemical reaction that occurs during combustion of modern-day construction and manufacturing materials. These facts are continually proven through national and international medical studies and have led 48 other states to adopt presumptive Cancer coverage for firefighters.

Would you **advocate** for presumptive coverage of Cancer under Workers' Compensation statutes and speak publicly in defense and further advocate for Cancer protections for firefighters?

Please highlight your answers

2A. Introduce

2B. Support

2C. Speak in FAVOR

3. Would you **OPPOSE** any legislation that is deemed detrimental to firefighters, and speak publicly in opposition to that legislation?

Please highlight your answers

3A. Oppose

3B. Speak AGAINST

4. In 2008, the General Assembly introduced legislation (SB 685 *AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A STATE MUNICIPAL FINANCE ASSISTANCE COMMISSION, 2008 Session*) that would give extraordinary powers to Special Review Boards when impaneled to assist municipalities in distress. This bill legalized the abrogation of collective bargaining agreements and the curtailment of collective bargaining as possible remedies for these situations. Would you;

SPONSOR - SUPPORT - OPPOSE

legislation that permits this type of treatment of workers?

5. In 1975, legislation was passed requiring that disputes between management and Fire Fighters be resolved through mediation, fact finding and binding arbitration. This forward-thinking legislation is now being emulated nationally. Unfortunately, the Connecticut Statute has been altered over the years in several significant areas. In 2010 & 2012, proposals were put forth to reduce the Arbitration Panel from three members (*1 Management Advocate, 1 Labor Advocate and 1 Neutral*) to a one (*neutral*) member Panel appointed by the Labor Board, effectively eliminating the equal balance of the current Panel arrangement. Would you;

SUPPORT - OPPOSE

legislation which weakens the current binding arbitration process and/or attempts to implement the 2010/12 proposal?

6. While private pensions are protected from underfunding or poor investing by Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, ERISA, Fire Fighter pensions do not have this kind of protection.

a) Would you;

SPONSOR - SUPPORT - OPPOSE

legislation to create ERISA-like protections and guarantees for municipal and state employee pension systems that would protect Fire Fighter pensions from under funding and fund "raiding"?

b) Would you;

SPONSOR - SUPPORT - OPPOSE

legislation to include Fire Fighter representatives in the decision-making process for investment of pension assets?

7. The State of Connecticut has created a "Hazardous Duty" classification for state employees who receive a pension credit of 2.5% for each year of service. Municipal employees in the Municipal Employees Pension System (MERS) do not. Would you;

SPONSOR - SUPPORT - OPPOSE

legislation to make changes to MERS so as to bring equality to municipal and state employees who work in a hazardous duty classification?

8. Currently, Connecticut Statute vests control of all emergency scenes to the ranking fire department officer on the scene. Would you;

SUPPORT - OPPOSE

changes to the current system?

9. Fire Fighters and Police Officers have had the protections of the Good Samaritan Laws for many years. Would you

SUPPORT - OPPOSE

maintaining the current law?

10. Connecticut Urban Search and Rescue Team (**US&R**), Connecticut Task Force 1 (**CT-TF1**) was developed to maintain the highest level of skills and capabilities required when deployed to natural or man-made disasters and is made up of both Professional and volunteer fire fighters from around the state from many different fire departments. The team has been deployed by the Governor numerous times over the last ten years. These deployments can include hurricanes, collapsed structures, floods, lost persons, conflagrations, explosions, earthquakes, or the use of weapons of mass destruction that are beyond the resources and capability of local emergency services. The Department of Homeland Security has provided over 7 million dollars in equipment located at Hartford's Brainard Airport.

The team has been deployed to: New London: Top Off 3- full response, Hartford; building collapse- full response, Colchester; building collapse- full response, Shelton: mud slide - IAT only, Derby: roof collapse IAT only, Shelton: partial building collapse; IAT, recon, two trucks, Middletown; Kleen Energy- Full activation, Middletown: North Main St. - IAT and first truck, Middletown; Main St. building collapse - full activation, Plainville; building collapse - IAT, recon, two trucks, Waterbury; building collapse; IAT recon, five trucks, Milford; building collapse - cancelled in route, Monroe; missing person - full response, East Haddam; missing person - full response, Ridgefield; two missing children - full response, Somers; Well recovery; IAT, recon and two trucks, East Haven; multiple building collapses - full activation.

The team coordinates and works under the on-scene Incident Commander to protect lives, stabilize emergency incidents and preserve property.

Would you;

SUPPORT - OPPOSE

continuing support to this critical emergency response team?

11. Every year there is a battle to adequately fund the regional fire training schools. These schools provide critical training for our fire service personnel. Would you

SPONSOR - SUPPORT – OPPOSE

legislation that would create a Connecticut Fire Safety Fund by adding a surcharge to all homeowner, rental, and commercial property insurance to fund the operating budgets of the schools and provide training free of charge to fire service personnel?

12. The **American Arbitration Association (AAA)** is a private enterprise in the business of arbitration, and one of several arbitration organizations that administers arbitration proceedings. The AAA also administers mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution.

Several municipalities have been pushing for a change in their employee collective bargaining agreements that would utilize **AAA** instead of the **Connecticut State Board of Mediation and Arbitration**. Utilizing AAA's services for arbitration is prohibitively more expensive than the \$200 filing fee charged by the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration and is seen by many IAFF local unions as management's mechanism to frustrate grievance filings by dramatically increasing the costs.

Would you;

SUPPORT - OPPOSE

protecting local union's right to arbitration by the Connecticut State Board of Mediation and Arbitration?

13. During the 2017 Session of the General Assembly, several members of various government and public safety agencies worked to create the FireFighter Cancer Relief Fund to support wage replacement and assist with medical costs for firefighters that incur Cancer in the line of duty. The funding mechanism for the FFCRF was ruled unconstitutional and this requires annual lobbying to secure funding from the budget, which is woefully underfunded.

(a) Would you support the annual funding and expanding of benefits of the FFCRF?

YES – NO

If yes, please expand on this answer below.

(b) Would you identify and advocate for a mechanism to capture annual revenues in order to maintain the fund?

YES – NO

