



SOUTH CAROLINA STATE FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION

APPRECIATION

- The fire service deeply appreciates the continued support received from the Governor and the General Assembly over the years. We are incredibly grateful to this dedicated group of public servants who truly make a positive difference in the first responder community. Even heroes need heroes. Thanks to the Governor and the General Assembly for being our champions.

INCOME TAX RELIEF

- The fire service is continuously seeking measures to bring people in or back into service where possible. We appreciate the General Assembly's effort to assist with hiring and retention through tax exemptions and credits for first responders. Clearly, these measures offer great incentive to attract potential new hires as well as retaining those currently employed. Currently there are several bills addressing income tax relief for first responders (**S64 and H3416**)

BUFFER ZONE LEGISLATION

- Creates a 25-foot safety zone around a first responder during any official action. This buffer will help ensure responders have the space needed to operate safely and prevents interference. (Second degree misdemeanor: Fine not exceeding \$500, imprisonment not exceeding 60-days). (**H.3535, S.175**)

FIREFIGHTER REGISTRATION ACT LEGISLATION

- Revises and clarifies requirements related to the registration of firefighters, specifically that a valid driver's license is required to register as a firefighter in South Carolina. (**S.101**)

PALMETTO 800 STATEWIDE RADIO SYSTEM

- The fire service is requesting funding for the statewide radio system in order to ensure interoperability among first responders during everyday response as well as to natural and man-made disasters. The request is an additional \$5.5 million (recurring) to reduce the user fees for first responders using Pal800 system and \$20 million (nonrecurring) as the first year of a five-year build out of a tower system designed to provide adequate coverage. (**H4025 - FY25-26 Appropriations Bill and H4026 Capital Reserve Fund**)

OSHA

- The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently proposed significant changes to the OSHA Fire Brigade standard (1910.156). The new OSHA rule (Emergency Response Standard), if approved in its current form, can significantly change the face of the fire service in South Carolina and across the nation. The goal of the new rule is to protect the safety of emergency responders. While the fire service certainly agrees that responder safety is critical, it is important to formally discuss and assess the impact of the new regulation on South Carolina and determine how the state can comply with standards while also continuing to provide critical services. (**1910.156**)