

# Fire Service Federal Policy Development & Prioritization



**Involve the fire service in federal policy development on an equal basis with law enforcement.**

## Issue

The fire service must be included in federal policy development on an equal basis with law enforcement when federal agencies develop policies and programs related to public safety, such as first responder behavioral health, building and fire codes, and the five mission areas of the National Preparedness Goal (prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery).

## Impact Areas

The White House Fiscal Year 2023 budget proposal includes \$1.97 billion in discretionary funding to support state and local law enforcement, an increase of 12% over the previous fiscal year.<sup>1</sup> This represents a significant investment in local law enforcement and is much needed. Despite the significant fire problem our nation faces, the Administration requested \$740 million for grants to local fire departments.<sup>2</sup> The National Fire Protection Association estimated the total cost of fire in the United States in 2014 was \$328.5 billion, approximately 1.9% of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product.<sup>3</sup> Federal investments in fire protection and response are not sufficient to address the scope of the problem.

In addition to supporting local law enforcement, federal law enforcement agencies have a significant presence in the federal government. These agencies include the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, Army Criminal Investigation Division, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Naval Criminal Investigative Service, Coast Guard Investigative Service (Department of Defense), Customs and Border Protection, Federal Protective Service, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, U.S. Secret Service (Department of Homeland Security), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Marshal Service (DOJ), U.S. Park Police (Department of Interior), IRS Criminal Investigations Division (Department of Treasury), U.S. Postal Inspection Service (U.S. Postal Service), Probation and Pretrial Services (Judicial Conference of the U.S.), and U.S. Capitol Police (United States Congress).

Nearly every department and agency in the federal government touches upon fire and emergency services. These departments are responsible for engaging with fire service stakeholders — inside and outside of the federal government — when developing policies and

<sup>1</sup>[FACT SHEET: President Biden's Budget Invests in Reducing Gun Crime to Make Our Communities Safer](#) (White House; March 28, 2022)

<sup>2</sup>[Fiscal Year 2023 President's Budget](#)

<sup>3</sup>[Total Cost of Fire in the United States](#) (NFPA; October 2017)



FEMA



U.S. Fire Administration  
Working for a fire-safe America



procedures impacting fire and life safety. Despite the fire service's significant footprint within these departments' mission, there is a lack of coordination and cohesive policy development among these agencies. Consistent, competent and effective leadership at the U.S. Fire Administration level can coordinate these policies and ensure that the fire service stakeholders can effectively operate at the national level.

### More Information



The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) should be elevated within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and transformed into a multi-disciplinary response, preparedness, and mitigation agency. As many response agencies already have, each FEMA region should have a dedicated USFA specialist to assist in the planning and response to disasters. USFA must be fully funded and appropriately staffed in order to execute its mission.

The federal government has numerous agencies and programs impacting the nation's fire and emergency services. Nearly every department in the federal government touches upon fire and emergency services. Here is a snapshot of some of the various programs in the federal government impacting fire and life safety.

#### Department of Defense

- ▶ Military firefighter health and safety

#### Department of Justice

- ▶ Bureau of Justice Assistance
- ▶ Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program

#### Department of the Interior

- ▶ Bureau of Land Management
- ▶ Wildland firefighting

#### Department of Agriculture

- ▶ U.S. Forest Service
- ▶ Wildland firefighting

#### Department of Commerce

- ▶ National Telecommunications and Information Administration
- ▶ First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet)

#### Department of Labor

- ▶ Occupational Safety & Health Administration

#### Department of Health and Human Services

- ▶ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/ National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health
- ▶ National Firefighter Registry

#### Department of Housing and Urban Development

- ▶ Public and Indian Housing
- ▶ Safe and affordable housing for our most vulnerable populations

#### Department of Transportation

- ▶ National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- ▶ Office of EMS

#### Department of Energy

- ▶ Office of Environment, Health, Safety & Security
- ▶ Fire Protection Program

#### Department of Education

- ▶ Office of Postsecondary Education
- ▶ Campus Safety & Security

#### Department of Veterans Affairs

- ▶ Safe and affordable housing for veterans and their families

#### Department of Homeland Security

- ▶ Federal Emergency Management Agency/U.S. Fire Administration
- ▶ National Fire Academy
- ▶ Assistance to Firefighters/Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response/Fire Prevention & Safety Grants



**FEMA**



**U.S. Fire Administration**  
Working for a fire-safe America

