



# OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

International Association of Fire Fighters  
AFL-CIO CLC

March 17, 2020

Co-Chair Senator Arnie Roblan and Co-Chair Paul Holvey, Committee Members,

For the record, I'm Karl Koenig, President of the Oregon State Fire Fighters,

Oregon's Fire Fighters continue to respond to this unprecedented pandemic each and every day since its arrival in Oregon. Our service to the citizens of Oregon is without prejudice, but not without peril. Oregon has 19 First responders in quarantine as of 5:00pm yesterday. An additional two were released and returned back to work on March 14th. Of those 19 none are symptomatic and are on Administrative Leave awaiting COVID 19 test results (11) for Persons Under Investigation and the remainder for the suspicion of exposure. The public can follow self-quarantine orders, we cannot. By our very nature we come in contact with the sickest before a test diagnosis is available and the very nature how we staff Oregon's Fire Stations leaves little room for quarantine. We are taking every precaution, protocol and call seriously and will continue to do so.

To date all of our employers have taken a positive employee advocate stance and performed exceptionally well in each instance of exposure, training and operations.

We are working with medical supply vendors, Oregon Emergency Management and the Oregon State Fire Marshal to keep Personal Protective Equipment in the fire stations. We are experiencing some equipment shortages and unfortunately some price gouging continues to our local Fire Departments, even after the Governor's Order.

We may seek this Committee's advocacy in dealing with the unknown long term effects of COVID 19 on the Health and Welfare of Oregon's Fire Fighters. As in the past with devastating fires, Oregon's Fire Fighters will continue to answer the call for help, no matter where you are or what you need. As this pandemic grows, we will report our needs clearly and succinctly to protect those who are first on scene protect us all.

Thank you for the opportunity to report on behalf of the 3600 career firefighters and paramedics of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council.

Sincerely,

*Karl Koenig /s*

Karl Koenig  
President  
Oregon State Fire Fighters Council

265 Commercial Street S.E., Suite 260 • Salem, Oregon 97301 • Phone (503) 540-0648 • Fax (503) 391-5878

[www.osffc.org](http://www.osffc.org)