



OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

International Association of Fire Fighters
AFL-CIO CLC

Senate Committee on Labor and Business
Chair Kathleen Taylor
Vice Chair Daniel Bonham
2023 Oregon Legislature

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Karl Koenig, President of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council. We represent the 3700 career fire fighters and paramedics throughout Oregon.

We are in support of Senate Bill 592 the overhaul of Oregon OSHA Fine system and investigation practices this legislative session.

The fire Service in general is very fortunate to have National Institutes of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) investigate most fire occupational fatalities through a matrix of situational questions to drive a responsible investigation. While NIOSH responsibility is not about blame, it does examine practices, equipment usage and maintenance, strategy, tactics, staffing, building construction, fire behavior and offers a complete examination of the incident. With this examination the employer can train, equip strategize how the fire department operate in a safer manner. While not identical to Oregon OSHA, it is an examination of occupational death in a workplace. We are fortunate the fire service and NIOSH operate as partners since 1998.

SB 592 modernizes the lowest fine structure in the country, assures a comprehensive examination of the employer's workplace. Death in the workplace calls for this type evaluation to assure those still working there that they are safe as possible.

Your fire fighters are all for injury and death prevention in the workplace and the low fine structure reflects a time gone by. Education, workplace compliance, and stringent impacts for non-compliance are a good start for worker safety.

Your fire fighters urge a Yes vote in Labor and Business Committee on Senate Bill 592!

Respectfully,

Karl Koenig
President
Oregon State Fire Fighters Council