The 17th Annual President Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium and the President Truman Fire Forum

Key West, Florida

May 5-7, 2019
“The serious losses in life and property resulting annually from fires cause me deep concern. I am sure that such unnecessary waste can be reduced. The substantial progress made in the science of fire prevention and fire protection in this country during the past forty years convinces me that the means are available for limiting this unnecessary destruction.”
Introduction

It is my pleasure to present the report of the 17th Annual Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium and President Truman Fire Forum held in Key West, Florida, on May 5-7, 2019.

The symposium is an annual educational event hosted by the Harry S. Truman Little White House and the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation. This year’s theme, “Truman’s Legacy Toward Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Historic Preservation”, centered on the achievements of the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention and its follow-up reports (Appendix A).

On May 6, 1947 President Truman, in response to a series of deadly fires, gathered the country’s best and brightest to convene the 1947 President’s National Conference on Fire Prevention. During the three-day event, those in attendance dedicated themselves to finding solutions to America’s deadly fire problem, the antithesis of an industrialized nation. Thus, fire prevention became a critical part of building a safer nation.

Seventy-two years later, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation is taking a page from President Truman’s playbook. Over 2 days, the Legacy Symposium brought together more than 80 professionals, including historians and fire service experts from fire departments across the nation, to share insights and brainstorm strategies to quell fire-related deaths and improve firefighter safety on a national level. The discussions centered on the latest fire prevention recommendations, to fulfill Initiative #14 of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (Appendix B).

Following the Legacy Symposium, the one-day President Truman Fire Forum brought together fire service leaders to strategize how to continue President Truman’s legacy of adapting the fire service to new challenges that are guaranteed to come with the passage of time, along with the nation’s increased dependency on new technologies and push towards urbanization.

No one could have summed up the importance of this event better than Clifton Truman Daniel, President Truman’s grandson, who in his final speech challenged the fire service and the public to rededicate efforts to eradicate the scourge of fire from our society and to continue President Truman’s legacy in their personal lives.

As you read the recommendations from the 17th Annual Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium and the President Truman Fire Forum, please keep in mind our generous sponsors who made this event possible. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation also received funding from the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Assistance to Firefighters Fire Prevention & Safety Grant Program—Fire Prevention and Safety Grants for this event.

Chief Dennis Compton
Past Chairman, Board of Directors
National Fallen Firefighters Foundation
Thanks to the organizations and businesses that made this event possible:

Event Sponsors

Additional funding provided by

This event was supported by DHS/FEMA’s Grant Program Directorate for Assistance to Firefighting Grant Program—Fire Prevention and Safety Grants.
## Contents

**Executive Summary**................................................................................................................ 1

**Background**............................................................................................................................ 4

- National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and the Everyone Goes Home® Program...........4
- Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation ..............................................................................5
- Harry S. Truman Little White House ..................................................................................5
- President Truman’s 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention...............................6
- The 1973 America Burning Report Revisited........................................................................8

### The 17th Annual President Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium...............................................9

- **Panel 1: Truman’s Impact on Public Support and Legislation**........................................ 10
  - Organized Public Support .................................................................................................10
  - Fire Prevention Education .................................................................................................13
  - Laws and Law Enforcement (Codes and Standards) .........................................................21

- **Panel 2: Truman’s Impact on Firefighting Services**.........................................................26
  - Importance of Federal Support for the Fire Service.........................................................26
  - Safety, Health and Wellness: Survivability of Firefighters...........................................32
  - Leadership: Administration and Command....................................................................40
  - Service Delivery and the Impact on Recruitment and Retention....................................45

- **Panel 3: The Future of Truman’s Legacy**..........................................................................49
  - Research ............................................................................................................................49
  - Data in the Fire Service ....................................................................................................56
  - Operations and Protection (Building Construction) .........................................................64

### Truman Fire Forum.................................................................................................................73
Recommendations: Continuing President Truman’s Legacy.................................74

Prioritize Five Strategies for Moving Forward..................................................74

Implement One of President Truman’s Six Committees per Year........................75

Convene the 2020 Firefighter Life Safety Summit.............................................75

Convene the 2020 Research Agenda Symposium..............................................76

Appendix.............................................................................................................77

Appendix A: Resources.....................................................................................77

Appendix B: 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives..............................................80

Appendix C: 24 Strategies to Moving Forward.................................................81

Appendix D: Meeting Attendees.....................................................................83

NFFF Mission ..................................................................................................89
Executive Summary

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation hosted the 17th Annual Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium on May 5-6, 2019, and the President Truman Fire Forum on May 7, 2019. Both events took place in Key West, Florida. This report provides an overview of the speakers’ and panelists’ guiding messages at the symposium and the recommendations from the forum (Appendix A).

The purpose of the symposium was to bring together historians to reflect on Truman’s legacy with an eye toward forecasting the future. This year’s theme “Truman’s Legacy Toward Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Historic Preservation” focused on how the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention provides an applicable model for combatting new challenges faced by the fire service today (Appendix A).

Members of the fire service, fire service support agencies, researchers, fire service experts, historians, and representatives of commercial interests including large, industry-leading fire service technology manufacturers, attended the symposium. A complete list of attendees for the symposium can be found in Appendix D.

The 17th Annual Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium had the following objectives:

Objective #1: Promote universal acceptance by the highest officials of the United States and municipalities of their direct responsibility for fire safety.

Objective #2: Gain public support from all possible sources behind the highest officials of the United States and municipalities to enact and enforce adequate laws and ordinances for fire prevention and fire protection.

Objective #3: Revisit recommendations made by the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report. Define and implement strategies to move forward President Truman’s legacy in the fire service (Appendix A and Appendix C).

The first two objectives were the same as those pursued by the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention. The third objective was inspired by the recommendations made in the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report.

The symposium held educational presentations and panel discussions on the following topics:

- President Truman’s Legacy with Public Support and Legislation
- President Truman’s Impact on Firefighting Services
- Future of President Truman’s Legacy

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

–Benjamin Franklin
Each presenter spoke on their area of expertise as it relates to each of the following panel topics:

- Organizing public support
- Improving fire prevention education
- Working with law enforcement
- Increasing federal support for the fire service
- Prioritizing health and wellness of firefighters
- Administering and commanding
- Recruiting and retaining new members
- Incorporating new research
- Refining how data is collected and used in the fire service
- Being aware of how new technological advancements could change the operations and protection approach in building construction

During the Truman Fire Forum, Chief Dennis Compton facilitated a two-hour discussion with attendees to gather their recommendations on strategies to improve fire prevention, firefighter safety, and life safety. Thirty recommendations were captured during this discussion, which then were condensed into 24 Strategies to Moving Forward (Appendix C). Attendees then ranked their highest priorities. The top five recommendations listed below are a result of this process, and are considered the most important strategies for meeting the needs, demands and expectations of the fire service. The five strategies prioritized for the year 2020 are as follows:

1. **Integrate fire prevention and public education into the regular operations of the fire department.** Key tenets of this strategy include encouraging fire departments to change their culture to value fire prevention on equally with operations, starting fire prevention education at the recruit level, viewing fire as a failure in the system, and understanding that the fire chief is ultimately responsible for Community Risk Reduction (CRR).

2. **Use data, research, and science as a basis for improving fire prevention.** Integrating data and research will give us the power to tell the story of why change is needed. Firefighters and fire officers are on the front lines of this and it is critical that they know the value and importance of data – both locally and nationally. This strategy includes the proper funding of basic fire service research, including physiological, fire behavior, and others.

3. **Marry modern solutions with modern challenges and problems.** Since the events of 1947, our nation has only grown more complex – both in our use and access to technology and in our people. Technology and interactive applications that didn’t exist in 1947 now give us the power to reach the public in ways once unimaginable. With this, the diversity of our nation’s generations and ethnic cultures has changed fire prevention and we must account for these complexities in developing our messages.

4. **Find new ways to leverage fire prevention safety efforts.** Identify and act on creative strategies to increasing fire prevention methods, such as encouraging government agencies such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), who provide 48% of all new mortgages, to limit mortgage funding to homes without sprinklers.
5. **Tell the fire prevention story.** Use professional marketing expertise to get our message out so that as many people as possible are aware of and understand the importance of fire prevention.

It should also be noted that this event was entered into the [Congressional Record](https://www.congress.gov/) on May 23, 2019 (Congressional Record Vol. 165, No. 87).
Background

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation (NFFF) and the Everyone Goes Home® Program

In 1992, Congress created the NFFF to honor America’s fallen firefighters and provide their families with the resources they need to rebuild their lives. In 2004, the NFFF expanded its mission to include the prevention of line-of-duty deaths and injuries by delivering firefighter health and safety training, resources, and advocacy under the Everyone Goes Home® program. The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives (FLSI) were created to support the Everyone Goes Home® program; each initiative focuses on a specific element of the fire service that impacts firefighter health and safety. To learn more about these programs, visit www.everyonegoeshome.com.

This report addresses Firefighter Life Safety Initiative #14, “Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.” A complete list of the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives can be found in Appendix B.

Fire and life safety education is an effective means of establishing fire safe behavior among people of all ages and abilities. It also promotes understanding and acceptance of regulations and technologies that can improve safety within the homes, businesses, and institutions. Furthermore, educating the public about how to prevent fires can contribute significantly to reducing firefighter deaths. If evacuation plans are in place and practiced by residents of a home or occupants of a building, responding firefighters will not as frequently face the personal risk associated with rescuing trapped citizens. Moreover, fighting extremely dangerous fires will become a less frequent necessity as individuals assume personal responsibility for the maintenance of smoke alarms and as they adopt early suppression technologies such as fire sprinklers.

FLSI #14 asks us to rethink our priorities in the fire service—to recognize the central and enduring value of public education, and to raise fire prevention to the level of other department operations.
Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation and the Harry S. Truman Little White House

The Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation exists to share history of the American Presidency and preserve and protect the Harry S. Truman Little White House. An old wooden house constructed by the Navy in 1890 as officer housing, the 8,700 square feet structure features louvered windows, balloon framing, and a historic barrage shingle roof. The house and the almost one acre of land it sits on is recognized as a State Heritage Landmark and is the State of Florida’s only presidential site.

The history of the Little White House extends far beyond the architecture of its walls. It originally served as the Naval Station Key West’s command headquarters during the Spanish-American War, World War I, and World War II. In 1946, the historic building first served as the Winter White House for President Harry S. Truman. President Truman would eventually spend 175 days of his presidency running the country from Key West. There, President Truman faced the rebuilding of Europe, the Palestine question, issues of Civil Rights and labor unrest changes in foreign policy and the U.S. response to the Cold War.

Over the years, the Little White House has also been visited by Presidents Taft, Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Carter, and Clinton. Thomas Edison used the house in 1918 where he invented 41 weapons for the United States Navy. In 2001, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell led international peace talks with the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Today, the Foundation’s efforts remain focused on historic preservation, maintaining the Little White House’s historical décor from the 1940s and 1950s, including about 90% of the original artifacts. The Foundation’s educational outreach components include hosting the Annual Truman Legacy Symposium, which is covered annually by C-SPAN; the Annual Presidential Family Forum, which in 2019 saw grandchildren and relatives in attendance from Presidents McKinley, Eisenhower, Truman and Ford. We even host educational talks to teach the public about our historic gardens and plant life at a Tropical Fruit Festival. A spring event, modeled after the White House’s Presidential Egg Roll, sees hundreds of children and their families come out to learn about history and have fun at an American icon. In 2009, 125 years after President Truman’s birth, the completion of a $1 million restoration of the Little White House has made it a must-see historical site.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Jeanna Garrido, the Foundation assists and guides all restoration efforts of the public museum and maintains the Truman Little White House as a place of government business for use by our nation’s leaders.
President Truman’s 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention

The 17th Annual Truman Legacy Symposium was held to commemorate a significant event in fire service history, the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention.

On May 6, 1947, President Truman, horrified and angered by three deadly fires, convened a gathering of the country’s best and brightest to attack a problem he believed was ravaging the country.

The fire toll has been rising since 1934. During the decade leading up to the conference, fire was responsible for 10,000 deaths annually. In 1946 alone, three large-loss fires at the Winecoff Hotel, LaSalle Hotel, and Ice Plant Fire in Manhattan claimed 217 lives. Known to be a man of action, President Truman, in his inimitable way, had had enough.

In early 1947, he invited representatives from every facet of the country’s fire service, local, state and federal governments, as well as luminaries from every other conceivable interest. The commission convened a three-day President’s Conference on Fire Prevention in Washington, D.C. Under the direction of Major General Philip Fleming, Administrator of the Federal Works Agency, several committees were formed to work on various areas, including fire prevention education, law enforcement, building construction, firefighting, organized public support, and research.

The result of their work was the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report (Appendix A), which advocated for the imperativeness of fire safety measures to save properties and human lives. This landmark document served as the catalyst for addressing a fire problem that was viewed as the antithesis of an industrialized nation with the prowess and progress of the United States.

An ongoing national committee was also created to develop action plans and evaluate progress. In 1948, they also produced the Final Report of the Continuing Committee of the President’s Conference on Fire Prevention (Appendix A). The Action Program adopted by the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention has proven to be paramount in the reduction of fire-related life and property loss.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Deadly Fires (1940-1947)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm Club Fire</td>
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<td>Coconut Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gulf Hotel</td>
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<td>Hartford Circus</td>
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<td>LaSalle Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winecoff Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ice Plant Fire</td>
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<td>Texas City Disaster</td>
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</table>
This conference also gave rise to the “Three E’s” for fire prevention:
- Engineering to design fire-safe buildings.
- Enforcement of fire codes.
- Education to teach the public how to prevent fires and what to do in a fire.
Since the conference, public support of major fire prevention and safety laws has created a safer country.

Below is a summary of the objectives and results of the efforts sparked by President Truman’s leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To gain universal acceptance by the highest state and local officials of their direct responsibility for fire safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To gain public support from all possible sources in accomplishing the enactment and enforcement of adequate laws and ordinances for fire prevention and fire protection</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Committees on fire prevention, fire services, law enforcement, research, building construction operations and protection, and public support were formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An ongoing national committee was created to develop action plans and evaluate progress.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Code adoption and enforcement, inspections, public education, and building construction regulations were improved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Statewide committees were appointed.</td>
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<td>• Local fire prevention committees were established.</td>
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A year after that first meeting, the national committee reported strong progress:

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<tr>
<td>• Governors established fire safety committees in 34 states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conferences were held in 18 states.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• National Fire Prevention Week activities were held in 1,832 cities (up from 715 the previous year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The National Education Association (NEA) developed a fire prevention education program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A pamphlet titled <em>A Guide to Community Organization for Fire Safety</em> was published.</td>
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Other tangible results:

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<tr>
<td>• Fire-safe cigarettes were created.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Federal flammability standards on sleepwear, upholstered furniture, mattresses, and more were established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Federal legislation for economic incentives to adopt and enforce model building codes to mitigate the cost of natural disasters was passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Firefighter health and safety measures through the NFFF’s 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives were adopted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other national fire organizations formed.</td>
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</table>
The 1973 America Burning Report Revisited

In the 45 years since the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control released America Burning, much has changed about the science of firefighting and community risk reduction – and American society and culture.

In the coming months, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will oversee a needs assessment to determine whether a similar national commission should be charged with recommending solutions applicable for today’s fire departments. Such a commission could be tasked with addressing current construction methods and building materials, as providing insights into the very different population fire departments now serve.

A review of legacy documents, including America Burning and subsequent works, contemporary resources, and interviews with subject matter experts will inform a draft document, which will include overarching recommendations. The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation will also host a 50-person meeting of national stakeholders and organizational leaders in conjunction with the Harry S. Truman Little White House in Key West, Florida, to review the document, offer additional recommendations, and finalize the report prior to widespread national release.
The 17th Annual President Harry S. Truman Legacy Symposium

Sunday, May 5

On Sunday, May 5, 2019, remarks were given by Jeanna Garrido, the Executive Director and General Manager of the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation; Clinton Curry, Director of Operations of the Key West Historic Tours of America; Chief Michael Davila of the Key West Fire Department; and Julius Halas, the Director of the Division of State Fire Marshal for Florida.

Opening remarks were then given by Vickie Pritchett, the Director of Outreach and Government Relations for the National Fire Sprinkler Association; Chief Ronald Siarnicki, the Executive Director of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation and First Responder Center for Excellence (FRCE); and Chief Ernie Mitchell, Chairman of the FRCE and member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Fire Administration from 2011 to 2017.

Jim Dalton, Senior Policy Advisor for the National Fire Sprinkler Association, and Steve Kerber, Director of the UL Firefighter Safety Research Institute, gave the keynote addresses.

Monday, May 6

On Monday, May 6, 2019, the symposium opened with the presentation of the colors by the Key West Fire Department. Chief Dennis Crompton, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, acted as the day’s moderator.

Opening remarks were made by Jeanna Garrido, the Executive Director and General Manager of the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation; Clinton Curry, Director of Operations of the Key West Historic Tours of America; and Bob Wolz, Executive Director Emeritus of the Harry S. Truman Little White House.

Full text of the panel presentations follows below.
Panel 1: President Truman’s Impact on Public Support and Legislation

Organized Public Support
Bill Webb, Executive Director, Congressional Fire Service Institute

Often, public support is a reactionary outcome of major disasters - and it was an outbreak of major fires in the U.S. that prompted President Harry Truman to convene the President’s Conference on Fire Prevention in 1947. In his opening remarks, President Harry Truman stated, “The Nation has been shocked by a long series of spectacular fires in the last few years – particularly in the last few months…” referring to the Great Fires of 1947.

Many speakers addressing the 1947 conference echoed President Truman’s central message to the attendees: “Safety from fire should not be a topic for discussion only one or two weeks of the year. It is definitely a year-round public responsibility.”

The goal of organized public support was to engage the public in supporting local government officials in enforcing fire prevention laws and codes. On that point, Mr. J.H. Craig, Chairman of the Fire Marshals Section of the National Fire Protection Association, made a compelling observation: “There ought to be a law” is the cry that goes up from the public every time there is a major fire disaster. As a result, the various state statute books are cluttered up with laws, some good, some bad, with the question of enforcement often left dangling in midair.” He went on to say that laws, rules, and regulations must be enforced.

It is interesting to note that only three fire organizations participated in the conference: the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the National Fire Protection Association. Those were the only national fire organizations in existence at the time. But all of the organizations represented at the conference had a vested interest in reducing the fire
loss in this country and had the ability to deliver the message of fire safety to local level where
the greatest impact could be achieved.

In advance of the conference, six committees were formed to study the fire problem:

- Committee on Law Enforcement
- Committee on Fire Prevention
- Committee on Firefighting Services
- Committee on Research
- Committee on Building, Construction, Operations, and Protection
- Committee on Public Support

The challenge of the Committee on Public Support was to arouse public awareness about
personal responsibility and engender public support for efforts by local officials to enact and
enforce standards and laws addressing fire safety. In the final report, the committee made the
following recommendations:

- Establish a Continuing Committee to implement the Action Plan
- Appoint statewide committees
- Establish local fire prevention committees
- Endorse the recommendations of the conference by the participating organizations
- Report on the Continuing Committee

One year later, as a result of the execution of these recommendations, the Continuing
Committee reported progress in many areas:

- The governors established state fire safety committees in 34 states.
- 18 state conferences were conducted.
- 1,832 cities participated in National Fire Prevention Week activities compared with 715
the previous year.
- The National Education Association developed a program to advance the
recommendations of the Committee on Fire Prevention Education.
- The Conference published a pamphlet titled “A Guide to Community Organization for
Fire Safety.”

Since the 1947 conference, public support has had a profound impact on major fire prevention
and safety laws and ordinances, including the following:

- All 50 states approved state fire-safe cigarette legislation.
- Federal legislation was enacted to provide businesses economic incentives to install
automatic fire sprinklers.
- Federal flammability standards on sleepwear, upholstered furniture, mattresses and
other products were established.
• Federal legislation was passed that provides economic incentives for states to adopt and enforce model building codes to mitigate the cost of natural disasters.
• The 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives were adopted addressing firefighter health and safety.

The fire service must never waiver from addressing future challenges and be willing to engage opposing forces. The public must participate in our efforts by expressing support for public officials who are committed to public safety. The national fire organizations must continue to challenge their members to become engaged at the local level, educating local government officials about the mission of our fire departments, including public safety education. And we must change the narrative so that fire prevention finds its way on the front page of our newspapers and public safety budgets.

The template we should use for recruiting public support and advocacy was developed when the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention established the Committee on Public Support. Coalitions are the key!
Fire Prevention Education
Lorraine Carli, Vice President, National Fire Protection Association

As I read President Harry Truman’s address made at the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention and other documents from the proceedings, I was intrigued and excited by the focus and discussion on fire prevention education. What struck me is they were dealing with exactly the same challenge we struggle with today; how do we get people to recognize fire as a threat and take action for their own safety? But then I realized this work in 1947 was what created many of the public education practices we have in place today, and they have greatly contributed to the reductions in fire loss we have seen since then.

Let’s start with the framing of fire prevention education. President Truman coined the term, “the spectacular fires” referencing four fires, three of which occurred within 16 days of one another and resulted in a combined total of 90 fatalities. President Truman talked about the fires that were occurring in the United States each day. He stated, “Thousands of lives are lost annually, and tens of thousands of people are injured in the many fewer spectacular fires which occur hour after hour and day after day, throughout the year.” He also highlighted the growing threat of forest and rural fires. What interested me the most was that he framed his speech with a theme of personal responsibility.

His comments and the fire landscape of the times underscored a need to do more to educate the public on the threat and their role in prevention.
Percy Bugbee, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) General Manager, was part of the conference and played a pivotal role in the subsequent action taken to promote fire prevention education. He released a document in 1948 in response to the *1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention* report. As you look at these numbers and messages, you’ll get a clear sense of the leading causes of fire back in 1947.

“Smoking and matches” was the leading cause of fires. “Children playing with matches” is listed as the seventh leading cause of fires. “Heating and electrical equipment fires” were also among the leading causes of fires. What is missing here, or what seems to be at first glance, is cooking fires. However, cooking fires at that time were categorized as "heating equipment fires"; so, in fact, they were a leading cause of home fires back then just as they are today.

So, what were the recommended approaches for fire prevention education and their impact today?

In large measure was a plan to reach schools at all levels and on multiple fronts. Teach fire prevention to all school children. Teach the teachers as part of their college education. Promote fire safe schools that include important features of fire safety. Practice school evacuation. Have the fire service go into schools. We have and continue to educate educators and children alike – think *Stop, Drop and Roll* and *Sparky the Fire Dog* created in 1951. They have been staples in this approach. Children are great receivers of fire safety messages and motivated ambassadors when they go home and share it with their parents.

This was a particularly important strategy, as President Truman’s address highlighted that young children were among the populations at greatest risk to fire. Until recently, that
statement continued to be true. But because the number of children impacted by fire has continued to decline, young children are no longer classified as a high-risk population. To get a better sense of just how dramatic that decline has been: Percy Bugbee’s document showed there were 22,500 home structure fires in 1947 resulting from children playing with matches. NFPA statistics show that in 1980, there were 430 home fires categorized as “playing with a heat source.” In 2015, that number dropped to 60 fires.

The NFPA’s Learn Not to Burn curriculum, which was developed in the late 1970s, was a program implemented in schools and continues to be used to this day, teaching children in grades pre-K through 2 how to be safer from fire. This program includes messaging around matches and lighters and has played a significant role in the associated dramatic declines we have witnessed since its launch. The technology change that resulted in childproof lighters and the decreased use of matches also contributed to this success.

During the homes fire fatalities, they also talked about the need to make fire prevention education materials visual and entertaining taking note of the success of radio and sound motion pictures, the media of the times. Thus, we saw the dawn of radio messages and public education films.

President Truman made it a point to call on a more concerted state and local effort saying the federal government cannot do this alone. The result was a bigger focus on Fire Prevention
Week, which was still in its infancy at that time. Now, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health campaign in the country having begun in 1922.

The importance of better educating the public about ways to prevent fires was clearly becoming top of mind. Fire Prevention Week was an ideal vehicle for drawing attention to the real risk that fires presented in people’s lives, and for communicating basic but critical messages to help reduce those risks at the state and local level. In the 1948 report evaluating the conference’s progress, most states reported increased activity around Fire Prevention Week and improved fire prevention public education in general.

We now promote Fire Prevention Week and its messaging in so many newer ways with the advent of the internet, social media, and video capabilities. However, at its core, Fire Prevention Week remains a grassroots campaign that continues to employ many of the same resources and tactics that were used 70 years ago – development and distribution of educational materials and traditional media coverage (newspaper and radio). It also continues to rely on fire departments, large and small, to bring the campaign to life in their communities each year. President Truman stated, “Safety from fire should not be a topic for discussion during only one or two weeks of the year. It is definitely a year-round public responsibility.”

In the 1948 Fire Prevention Week flyer with the “fifth horseman” that I showed, it says, “Make Every Week Fire Prevention Week!” And that is what was happening at the time. The success and impact of Fire Prevention Week served as a launching pad for expanding public education efforts around community-based fire safety beyond one week of the year.

At the NFPA today and in fire departments around the country, public education is a year-round effort and considered an integral part of the current movement towards community risk reduction.
The approaches championed in the late 1940’s worked. In the big picture, we know that the number of fires and the devastating impact they incur on people and property each year has dramatically declined since President Truman provided his address in 1947.

### U.S. Home Fire Rates: 1980 vs. 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fires</th>
<th>Civilian Deaths</th>
<th>Civilian Injuries</th>
<th>Direct Property Damage (in Billions)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As Reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>734,000</td>
<td>5,200</td>
<td>19,700</td>
<td>$2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>357,000</td>
<td>2,630</td>
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Although some of the documents from the event quoted NFPA statistics, NFPA didn’t have consistent yearly fire data until the late 1970s, which makes direct comparisons to where we were 70 years ago versus today a bit challenging. But just looking at where we have been over the past 40 years helps demonstrate the progress made tackling the United States fire problem.

- In 1980, 734,000 home structure fires occurred in the US. In 2017, that number dropped to 357,000.
- According to an annual report by the National Safety Council, there were 8,300 fire deaths in 1947. In 1980, there were 5,200 civilian deaths; in 2017, that number dropped to 2,630.
- In 1980, there were 19,700 fire injuries; in 2017, the number dropped to 10,600.

These declines – a 48% decline in fires; a 50% decline in deaths and 53% decline in injuries – reinforce just how far we’ve come.

Now let’s talk about today’s leading causes of home fires. “Smoking material fires” have dropped substantially from well over 100,000 in 1947 to an annual of 18,100 fires and now represents the fifth-leading cause of home structure fires. We have clearly made tremendous strides in reducing the smoking materials fire problem. That is, in large part, the result of public education campaigns and initiatives over the years that worked to better educate people about the potential risks of carelessly discarding cigarettes and other smoking materials. Messages like “smoke outside” and “fully extinguish cigarettes” have played a big role in behavior change.
However, smoking materials, of all kinds, is the leading cause of home fire deaths. It does remain an issue that continues to present challenges. There are other fire safety issues that continue to present the most significant risks to the public. Seventy years after President Truman’s address, “heating, cooking and electrical fires” remain leading causes of home fires.

And of course, “forest fires and wildland urban interface fires” in particular, are a tremendous area of concern. In fact, today Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fires reflect the one area where we continue to see the number of fires on the rise, and it cries out for more fire prevention education. It is an area where the public underestimates their risk and takes little to no action to protect themselves and their property.

So, considering all the work we do, all the progress we have seen, and the fire risks we are still facing – where are we now?

Key Takeaways

- We are, in fact, much safer from fire on the whole than we were back in 1947
- Public education, use and enforcement of codes and standards, widespread use of smoke alarms, technological advances improved safety
- With that success has come complacency. The public at large doesn’t see fire as a significant threat.
- In reality fire remains a risk and there are newer dimensions at play.
- We need a new catalyst to move forward.

The truth is, we have become a victim of our success. We are, in fact, much safer from fire on the whole than we were back in 1947. The combination of public education, enforcement of fire safety codes, widespread use of smoke alarms, and other technological advances have dramatically reduced loss. But with that success has come complacency. The public at large do not see fire as a significant threat and do not feel an urgent need to take action for their own safety. The same challenge surfaced during President Truman’s 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention.

In reality, fire remains a risk and there are newer dimensions at play. Think about how homes were built and what went in them in 1947. Today’s homes, built with unprotected lightweight construction with open spaces and loaded with synthetic furnishings, burn much faster. We would likely say in 1947 you would have about eight to ten minutes or maybe more to escape a home fire whereas now you may have as little as two minutes to escape safely from the time the smoke alarm sounds. While we continue to see a downward trend in the number of fires occurring in the United States, the home fire death rate has remained fairly consistent. The
number of home fire fatalities actually increased by 10% in 2016. We see the majority of home fire deaths occurring in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. In fact, if you have a home fire today, you are more likely to die than you were in 1980. Do we think the majority of Americans know that?

As compelling and concerning as those statistics are, the public is overrun with information and new findings on many topics every single day. Also, the way in which people consume news and information has completely changed since 1947. Reaching specific audiences, capturing their attention, and spurring action is not an easy task. Fire prevention through schools in an age of strict curriculum practices has become more challenging. The public is bombarded with lots of messages across lots of channels, making it difficult for safety information to rise above the clutter.

At the NFPA, we have thought a lot about the challenges – from a complacent public that underestimates their risk to fire to a series of other trends that have contributed to increased risk of fire, not just in homes but in all locations. In recent years, we have seen a back-peddling on the measures that contribute to our fire safety success; things like the use and enforcement of the latest codes and standards and using the technologies that we know work.

Seeing these trends persist, the NFPA started to connect the dots on all the vital elements of safety that must be in place to reduce loss. We began to think about it in a new way and conceived what NFPA is calling the Fire and Life Safety Ecosystem. It is a framework for how we talk about what it takes to keep people and property safe.

A full system of fire and life safety depends on all eight of these cogs working together. When a tragedy occurs, we can almost always trace back to the breakdown of one or more components.

Today, there are many examples that point to gaps, cracks, and weaknesses in the Fire & Life Safety Ecosystem. Often, it’s because safety is taken for granted. Fire is not on the top of the list for policymakers. The public is not all that concerned about fire because we have done a good job of bringing the numbers down. The results can be seen in codes that are watered down by special interests or not properly enforced. Safety investments in research, for example, which informs every other cog, often take a backseat if thought about at all.
With regards to my topic on fire prevention education, the main cog is an informed public. The public must understand their risk. For example, the general over-confidence toward fire is made evident through the number of homes fire fatalities that occur in homes each year where the smoke alarms have been dismantled or are not working due to dead or missing batteries. On the other hand, when the public is properly educated and informed, they can act to protect themselves. The public also plays a role in holding policymakers accountable for the safety of their communities.

More than 70 years ago, the landmark report that came from the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention ignited the fire service and the public to action. As a result of President Truman’s efforts, undeniable strides have been made in fire prevention. Today, we need a new catalyst.

I would offer the Fire and Life Safety Ecosystem as the framework for addressing today’s needs. We are increasingly seeing wide gaps in this ecosystem. By identifying the gaps and working to shore up this ecosystem, we can meet the challenges of our times. As President Truman and others emphasized in 1947, everyone is responsible for safety. We must work together to help promote, implement, and enforce the full Fire & Life Safety Ecosystem.

It will take all of us to keep the public safe from fire over the next 70 years and beyond.

Thank you.
Laws and Law Enforcement (Codes and Standards)
Jonathan Jones, State Fire Marshal, South Carolina

I am honored to have the opportunity to represent state fire marshals, and on a larger scale, all those who share in the responsibility of enforcing fire safety and prevention codes and laws. Coupled with this honor, I feel the enormous burden of responsibility, or in President Truman’s own words, “the clear responsibility of every state and local official, and every citizen, to aggressively support this national war against the growing menace of fire.” It is clear, from the remarks of the Honorable John Knox who served as Chairman of the Committee on Laws and Law Enforcement in 1947 that they, too, felt the tremendous weight of the responsibility. I am grateful for leaders, like President Truman, who set their hearts to do something about the problem of fire that plagued our Nation, much like Nehemiah, who set his heart to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

“There ought to be a law’ is the cry that goes up from the public every time there is a major fire disaster.”
— John Craig, Illinois State Fire Marshal, 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention

I cannot think of a better way to begin my remarks regarding fire prevention laws and law enforcement than with a quote from former Illinois State Fire Marshal, John Craig. In the opening remarks at the 1947 Conference, he said, “‘There ought to be a law’ is the cry that goes up from the public every time there is a major fire disaster.”

This statement is as true in 2019, as it was in 1947. Unfortunately, history has proven many of our fire and life safety laws, as well as changes to codes and standards, come on the heels of life’s most tragic events. The 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention approached the problem of fire in the United States, sobered by the experiences of fires at the Cocoanut Grove nightclub, the Winecoff Hotel, and the Hotel LaSalle. In our modern times, our memories are plagued by the tragedies of the Beverly Hills Supper Club, the MGM Grand Hotel, the Happy Land Social Club, and even more recently, the Station Nightclub.

On the subject of Law and Law Enforcement, the 1947 Committee found many of the fire prevention statues, codes, and ordinances in place at the time were antiquated and obsolete. According to the Committee’s report, of the 16,220 municipalities in the United States, less than 2,000 had a building code. Where codes were adopted, many were ten, twenty, and more
than thirty years old. The Committee also found enforcement of these statutes, codes, and ordinances to be problematic and often elusive.

Ultimately, the Committee presented seven recommendations from their exhaustive legal and political research.

1. Each state and each municipality should initiate, immediately, a study to determine whether its present fire prevention regulations are so antiquated and obsolete as to create perils to human life.

2. Recognizing that engineering and other technical knowledge is constantly discovering new materials and new methods for building construction which render existing fire prevention regulations inadequate, each state and municipality should create a continuing advisory board of experts charged with the duty of making recommendations which will keep the respective state or city fire prevention regulations up to date.

3. Fully realizing the dangers inherent in so-called “model building codes” and standards designed by certain industries for their own protection, cities should be given adequate legal authority to adopt properly prepared, and approved “model” codes and standards by reference, or by some other simplified method, to avoid the prohibitive costs of publishing lengthy codes in local newspapers.

   The incorporation, by reference, should be to a named code as of a certain fixed date to avoid delegation of legislative powers to the preparers of the “model” code or standard and adequate provisions should be made to insure that copies of the “model” code or standard which adopted by reference are readily available.

4. Adoption of a general ordinance containing legally sufficient standards governing building maintenance and construction with reference in such a general ordinance to certain properly prepared and approved “model” codes and standards as “prima facie” evidence of compliance with such standards is another method of avoiding the prohibitive cost of publishing lengthy building codes which should receive the most careful study.

5. Adoption of statewide fire prevention laws and building codes is a subject that needs further study by all interested in adequate fire prevention. Division of enforcement responsibility and administrative problems, which appear to be rather difficult in connection with a statewide building code do not appear to be an impediment where the state legislation covers specific subjects such as places of public assembly, hotels and other structures designed primarily for public use or subject to a particular hazard. Where such state laws are desirable, division of enforcement responsibility should be avoided.
6. In the entire field of fire prevention there is no subject that needs attention more than that of statute and ordinance enforcement. Steps should be taken by all states and cities to ensure that they are not among the state and cities where future disasters are caused by lack of adequate enforcement of existing laws.

7. Creation by the Council of State Governments, the National Association of Attorneys General, the United States Conference of Mayors and the National Institute of Municipal Law Officers of standing committees with a militant program on building codes and fire prevention ordinance is highly desirable. The drafting by representatives of these organizations of a model statute permitting adoption of codes and ordinances by reference is recommended.

Next, I would like to highlight some of the work that has been accomplished towards most of the recommendations from the 1947 Committee on Laws and Law Enforcement.

1. States and local governments have made significant improvements regarding the currency and relevancy of their adopted fire prevention regulations, codes, and standards. Based on information provided on the International Code Council website, few states have adopted versions of the Building Code, Residential Code, or Fire Code that are older than ten years. Most states are utilizing versions of these codes that are no more than one to two cycles behind the 2018 edition of the codes. Some states, such as South Carolina, are currently in the process of adopting the latest edition of these codes.

2. Many states utilize Councils or Committees consisting of technical experts and industry representatives to review the latest editions of building and fire codes and to adopt or recommend adoption of new codes and standards, often with state or local modifications.

3. States and local governments generally adopt, by reference, nationally recognized codes and standards developed by the International Code Council and the National Fire Protection Association. Codes developed by organizations, such as these, limit a single industry’s influence on the content of the code. These nationally recognized codes are comprehensive, often inter-related, and developed by committee consensus or by vote of the organization’s membership, after exhaustive technical input and debate.

Through the adoption process, most states and local governments have the ability to modify the “model” codes to meet the specific needs of the jurisdiction. These codes are most often adopted by reference to a named code, with or without local modifications, as of a certain fixed date. This accomplishes the intent of the 1947 recommendation to avoid delegation of legislative powers to the preparers of the “model” code or standard. The codes and standards are published and made available through a subscription service, with free access via the internet.
4. Most states have adopted statewide fire prevention laws, regulations, and building codes, to varying degrees. Some states allow certain codes, including building, fire, and residential codes to be adopted by local governments, in lieu of statewide adoption. Some states require local jurisdictions to adopt the latest versions of the codes adopted by the state, as prescriptive codes. Other states allow local jurisdictions to modify the codes and standards on the local level, with a small number of states allowing local jurisdiction to adopt portions of the codes that have not been adopted statewide.

5. Statute and ordinance enforcement continue to be a complex issue with wide-ranging methods of enforcement. Some states and local jurisdictions have the ability to issue criminal fines and civil or administrative penalties for failure to comply with the requirements of the adopted codes and standards and failure to correct certain violations. Other states and local jurisdictions have the ability to declare a building with significant hazards as “unsafe” and require the building to be vacated until corrections are made, but lack middle-ground enforcement measures such as criminal fines or civil penalties. This often leads to a lack of enforcement for less serious violations, which do not reach the severity of declaring the building as “unsafe”, and code officials seeking “voluntary” compliance by educating the building owner about the hazards found.

While significant progress has been made in the area of laws and law enforcement since 1947, much work is still to be done if we are to truly accept our responsibility for reducing the incidence of fires and the associated loss of property, injuries, and fatalities, in the United States. According to the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report, an average of ten thousand persons died annually from fire. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, annual deaths from fire in the U.S. were estimated at 12,000 in 1974, the year in which the U.S. Fire Administration was established. At that time, a goal was set for reducing this number by half within a generation. This goal was met. By 2012, civilian fire deaths reached their lowest history level, at 2,855 for the year. The latest statistics available, reveal 3,400 fire deaths in 2017.

In the time since 1947, fire prevention laws, codes, and standards have created a safer environment in most commercial and public buildings by requiring fire resistive construction, compartmentalization, fire detection and alarm systems, and automatic fire suppression systems. These advancements, combined, have reduced fire fatalities in these occupancies to three percent of the fire deaths and seven percent of fire injuries, in 2015.

So, where do we go from here? How do we continue to carry the mantle of responsibility and honor the legacy of the 1947 Conference on Fire Prevention? We must “ride to the sound of the guns”. In other words, we must take our actions to where the problem resides and where they will have the most impact on today’s fire problem. It is not difficult to identify where today’s efforts will have the greatest impact. Over the years, the statistics have remained virtually the same regarding the proportion of deaths, injuries, and dollar loss by the property involved. The largest percentage of reported deaths (73.2% in 2016), fire injuries (76.5% in 2016), and fire
dollar loss (54.7% in 2016) occur in residential occupancies – most in one- and two-family dwellings. While we cannot let our guard down in the adoption and enforcement of commercial building codes, we must address the threat of fire to our citizens in their homes.

From the perspective of the Committee on Laws and Law Enforcement, this property type is where enforcement is usually the weakest. Code enforcement is generally limited to inspections by the local building official, satisfying the requirements of the permitting process to get a Certificate of Occupancy or Completion. Most jurisdictions do not have provisions for fire and property maintenance inspections of private dwellings. New construction methods often utilize “open floorplan” designs, which limits the amount of compartmentalization in the home and allows fire and smoke to spread throughout the home. While the same automatic suppression technology exists for one- and two-family dwellings, and this technology is required in the “model” codes, most jurisdictions have modified the residential codes to remove this requirement. Some states have even passed laws to prevent the codes from being adopted with a requirement for home fire sprinklers. New construction requires smoke alarms. However, it is difficult to enforce a requirement for the homeowner to maintain the smoke alarms over time.

Without the ability to enforce fire codes and property maintenance requirements where most fire-related fatalities, injuries, and the largest monetary loss of property occur, we must focus on education. Research has shown the leading causes of fires in homes are due to human behavioral factors, such as unattended cooking, improper heating, and smoking. These causes are all preventable. Because it is nearly impossible to regulate human behavior, we must focus on education. Compartmentalization can be accomplished in sleeping areas by closing bedroom doors. Smoke alarms must be maintained. While not required in most jurisdictions, homeowners can choose to incorporate home fire sprinklers into their new home and renovation projects. We must educate our citizens about how to maintain a safe environment in their homes and what technology is available to virtually eliminate the chances of a fire-related fatality occurring in their home.

We still have work to do to make a significant impact on today’s fire problem. We have no time to rest on our past accomplishments, because lives are at stake. We must continue to find ways to incorporate technology and engineer safety into our building designs. We must continue to seek ways to improve the enforcement of fire prevention laws, regulations, codes, and standards. We must continue to focus on education as a means of gaining compliance in addition to enforcement.

To close, I’d like to share the words of Clarence Meadows, Governor of West Virginia, from the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention, “From here on, the problem is ours. Our President has issued the order – it is the duty of every American – individually, officially, and cooperatively – to carry out the command. Will you do it? I believe you will.”
Panel 2: President Truman’s Impact on Firefighting Services

Importance of Federal Support for the Fire Service
Chief Keith Bryant, U.S. Fire Administration

In May of 1947, President Harry S. Truman convened the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention bringing together city, state, and federal government officials and other nationally recognized groups with interest or involvement in fire prevention. In his address to those gathered at this conference, President Truman stated that, “The Nation has been shocked by a long series of spectacular fires in the last few years, particularly in the last few months, which have resulted in such great loss of life and such wide spread misery”. President Truman further stated that, “We must find ways and means to combat the ever-present danger of fire and explosion”.

President Truman set the tone of the conference by detailing the many large fire-related disasters experienced in 1947. In Texas City, Texas, there was an explosion that resulted in the deaths of over 500 people, destroying the seaport, many surrounding commercial structures, and 500 homes. In Chicago, Illinois, one of the fires occurred at the LaSalle Hotel resulting in the death of 61 people. Coming on the heels of the La Salle Hotel fire, another devastating hotel fire occurred in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Winecoff Hotel claiming the lives of 119 people.

President Truman painted a sobering picture. In 1947, there was an average of 830,000 fires each year in the United States. President Truman was keenly aware of the annual large loss of life due to fire-related disasters. The number of lives loss was in the thousands and injuries were in the tens of thousands. Among his greatest concern was loss of life among the young stating “fire strikes hardest at youth” citing the statistic that two thousand children on average die annually in fires. He spoke of the staggering loss of property and put the dollar amount of
the loss of goods, natural resources, and structures at more than $560 million. President Truman also had an awareness of the threat to the nation’s forests, wildlands, and rural areas.

President Truman charged those attending this conference to “determine the causes of this destruction and map out a program of preventive action”. President Truman tasked state and municipal officials to assume greater responsibility for leadership in fire prevention and stated, “We in the Federal Government can give aid within the framework of existing agencies. But the impetus must come from the States and from every community and every individual in the land.” Thus, President Truman made it clear he believed that the Federal Government had a role to play in fire prevention and a responsibility to push for fire prevention support on the state and local level.

From that conference, the Continuing Committee of the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention was formed. The Continuing Committee was a 32-person committee chaired by Major General Phillip B. Fleming, who had chaired another committee tasked with reducing the high rate of highway vehicle accidents the previous year. The Continuing Committee was put in charge of generating a report based on the Action Program of the conference. They assessed on a state-to-state basis issues including the following:

- Creating technical methods of fire prevention and protection
- Considering fire prevention when building and maintaining structures
- Establishing codes and laws
- Analyzing industrial development and its impact on the fire problem
- Improving training for firefighters

State and municipal officials’ acceptance of responsibility for fire safety and the enactment and enforcement of adequate laws and ordinances for fire prevention and fire protection was essential to the accomplishment of the objectives presented at the conference.

The Continuing Committee’s report was delivered to President Truman on May 13, 1948, which marked a time of a “historic level of activity in fire prevention”. Governors of 34 states had established fire safety committees. There were statewide fire prevention conferences in 18 states, and more than 510 cities reported fire prevention acts such as eliminating fire hazards,
passing new codes and ordinances, the procuring new or improved equipment, and creating better training for firefighters.

The Continuing Committee on Fire Prevention evolved into the National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control as established by the Fire Research and Safety Act of 1968. This act called for a 20-person commission to be formed to conduct a two-year study of the nation’s fire problem aiming to determine effective measures for reducing the destructive effects of fire. The commission’s members were officially appointed in 1971 by President Richard Nixon. The group was chaired by Professor Richard Bland, of Penn State University, and General President W. Howard McClennan, of the International Association of Firefighters. It is of interest that serving on the commission was General Manager Percy Bugbee of the National Fire Protection Association, who was also a member of President Truman’s Continuing Committee on Fire Prevention in 1948.

The Commission conducted regional hearings across the United States surveying communities with regards to incidents involving fire. The group concluded their study on May 4, 1973, submitting a report to President Nixon entitled America Burning. America Burning reported 12,000 lives lost annually, 300,000 fire related injuries and $2.7 million in property loss. The report also spoke of and supported the proposed U.S. Fire Administration. The report outlined recommendations for tasks of this new agency which included developing a comprehensive national fire data system that would help establish priorities for research and action, to monitor fire research in both the governmental and private sectors, to provide block grants to states so that local governments may develop comprehensive fire-protection plans, improve firefighting equipment, to establish a National Fire Academy for the advanced education of fire service officers and for assistance to state and local training programs and to undertake a major effort to educate Americans in fire safety.

The next year, Congress passed the National Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, which established the U.S. Fire Administration, known at that time as the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration. As per the recommendations in America Burning, Congress gave this new agency four legislative mandates, to train and educate America’s firefighters, data collection and analysis, public education and awareness, and applied research and technology. The Fire Prevention and Control Act and the establishment of the U.S. Fire Administration could be viewed as a move from support to direct involvement and action to address the Nation’s fire problem.

In fulfilling the Fire Administration’s mission as mandated by Congress, the National Fire Academy provided 35,000 course offerings reaching over 100,000 students providing 210,000
students days of instruction. Courses have evolved over time to address the all-hazards
environment that the fire service of today must face. These educational offerings include
command and control of fire related incidents and other disasters, emergency medical services,
fire prevention and investigations, community risk reduction, hazardous materials response,
and safety and health programs. Leadership programs such as the Executive Fire Officer and
Managing Officer programs have helped prepare thousands of fire service personnel for upper
management and administrative positions within our industry.

The National Fire Programs Division produces many programs and materials to educate the
public and increase awareness of fire prevention and safety. Among the materials available to
support fire prevention efforts at the state and local level are audio public service
announcements, pictographs with fire safety messages and instructions for the non-English
speaking population, and media and social media tool kits. One of National Fire Program s
major campaigns is “Fire is Everyone’s Fight” a national initiative to unite the fire service, life
safety organizations and professionals in an effort to reduce home fire injuries, deaths and
property loss by changing how people think about fire and fire prevention.

The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) currently collects over 26 million incident
reports from 24,000 agencies. This data is used for various statistical reports and publications
such as general information related to fire, fatality and injuries among civilians and firefighters,
fires in specific occupancy types like residential, hotel/motel, public assembly, medical facilities
and others. NFIRS data can be accessed by local departments and other agencies for
information specific to their community to help them with administrative and operational
decisions.

Most of the research the United States Fire Administration is involved in is in partnership and
support with other research agencies such as the National Institute of Standards and
Technology (NIST), Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), Department of Homeland Security
(DHS) Science and Technology, and others.

Outside of the United States Fire Administration, the fire service is supported by the Federal
Government by various grant programs. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) and Staffing
for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant programs are currently funded at
$700 million ($350 million each) and administered by the Federal Emergency Management
Agency (FEMA). These programs are competitive and peer reviewed. Assistance to Firefighters
Grant provides federal grants directly to local fire departments and unaffiliated Emergency
Medical Services (EMS) organizations to help address a variety of equipment, training, and
other firefighter-related and EMS needs. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant also supports fire
prevention projects and firefighter health and safety research and development through the Firefighter Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grant program. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response provides grants for hiring, recruiting, and retaining firefighters.

Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG) are available for fire response agencies to recover costs associated with response to major wildfires severe and large scale enough to be declared disasters. Recently, the FMAG program was amended to also fund post-fire mitigation efforts to include erosion control and landscape recovery measures.

Since the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report, and certainly over the past 45 years since the America Burning report and the Fire Prevention and Control Act, progress has been made in fire prevention and safety. Data from 2017 indicates there were a little more than 1.3 million reported fires in the United States, this is an approximately 40% reduction over the last 40 years. There were 3,400 fire related fatalities in 2017. This is a 54% decrease over the past 40 years. However, I would bring to your attention that the most recent trend is not positive.

Over the past nine years there has been a 9.6% increase in fire deaths. In 2017, 87 firefighters lost their lives in the line-of-duty. In the late sixties and early seventies, there were years that as many as 200 firefighters were killed in a year. While we should celebrate any reductions and the overall downward trend in firefighter fatalities attributable to a great deal of focus, effort and advancement of firefighter safety; the numbers have essentially flattened out over the past ten years. More and more states are recognizing occupational illness, primarily cancer, as job-related. Thus, line-of-duty deaths are increasing. The dollar loss from fire in 2017 was reported as $23 billion. This represents a more than doubled increase from the previous year; however, $10 billion of this loss was directly related to the wildfires in northern California.
While progress has been made in several areas, many challenges currently confront the Nation and the fire service and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. The wildland/urban interface problem continues to increase in terms of severity and complexity. As mentioned earlier, the loss of life and property due to wildfire over the past two years makes the case that this has become America’s primary fire problem. Emergency Medical Services continues to evolve in how the sick and injured are treated and the increasing role of the fire service in non-emergency health care.

Mass casualty events, acts of terrorism, and violence have added to the challenges faced by the fire service requiring increased and different planning and training for such events, as well as the protective equipment necessary for response.

Data collection and analysis has become more critical in recent years. Many agencies still struggle with the ability to use data to their best advantage in identifying their local fire problem and being able to rely on the accuracy of their data when reporting to the policy makers and citizens of their communities.

Occupational injury and illness still pose a major threat to the health and safety of firefighters. As well protected as our firefighters are with state-of-the-art personal protective equipment, recent research tells us fires are burning hotter and faster and are releasing more toxic products of combustion due to the increased use of synthetic and petrochemical materials in modern construction. A recent study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) concluded that firefighters face a 9 percent increase in cancer diagnoses, and a 14 percent increase in cancer-related deaths, compared to the general population in the United States. Minorities and women remain underrepresented in the fire and emergency services in spite of varied recruitment efforts and programs. The concept of community risk reduction continues to develop. The fire service’s approach to hazard and risk identification has become more holistic putting an emphasis on pre-emergency hazard mitigation. Many of the issues faced by the fire service are not regionally specific. Therefore, the Federal Government will continue to have a necessary and important role to play in supporting the American fire service.
Safety, Health and Wellness: Survivability of Firefighters
Patrick Morrison, Assistant to the General President for Occupational Health, Safety and Medicine, International Association of Fire Fighters

Denny: Pat Morrison, who has played a pivotal role in getting the Firefighter Cancer Registry Act passed in the past year.

Pat Morrison: Thank you, Denny. This is an amazing gathering of so many wonderful leaders in the fire service I have had the privilege of working with over the years... from different

“Any action that would prevent the loss of one firefighter’s life would justify this conference.”

–George Richardson, 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention

calls, disasters, research projects, and grants. It is incredible to see the array of individuals that are assembled here. I want to thank the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation and the Harry S. Truman Little White House for hosting this event. It was a great event we had last night, and I really appreciate all that you do. Here is picture taken at the President's Conference on Fire Prevention. It is not a great photograph, but you can see to President Truman's immediate left stands the Secretary-Treasurer of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), George Richardson.
George Richardson is probably one of our longest-serving executives. I just wanted to bring your attention that he was there in 1947. I was reading George Richardson's comments from the 1947 President's Conference on Fire Prevention. He said, "Any action that would prevent the loss of one firefighter's life would justify this conference." And I think that is why we are here today. Any action that we do that would reduce the number of lives lost is worth pursuing, and, hopefully, we will do just that.

President Truman wrote back to the International Association of Fire Fighters, "I am aware of your organization's greatest contribution in the field of fire prevention and fire protection. The work of your association on behalf of the members of the Fire Service, of the nation, has been outstanding. The improvements that have been made for the members of the Fire Service are a direct result of the work of your association."

And I don't say that because of our association. What I'm saying is President Truman got it. He understood the importance of assembling the right players (International Association of Fire Fighters, labor, management, National Fire Protection Association, etc.), sitting them down at the table, and facilitating a conversation to improve fire prevention measures. That is how solutions will be determined. This is how we can develop incredible programs that work.

To honor the conference's intent to promote survivability of firefighters, I will be talking about the importance of health and wellness of firefighters. The two main topics I will be addressing is cancer and behavioral health in the fire service.

**Cancer**

What if President Truman was here presiding over this conference in 2019? He would be talking about some of these subjects we will be addressing today. He would be asking about cancer in the fire service. Why are the numbers so high for those diagnosed with job-related cancer in the fire service? What are we going to do about it? Firefighters are dying from occupational-related cancers, which now accounts for 65% of line-of-duty deaths reported. In 2018, there were 271 names added to the IAFF Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Two-hundred eleven (211) of them were from occupational cancer. It is an epidemic. That is a number that we have to change. Cancer is our biggest concern.

So, let me pose these questions to you: How are we taking care of those firefighters that we need to survive? How do we reduce the number of firefighters dying because of job-related cancer? What do we need to do? What do we need to develop? Where do we need to go?

Dennis Compton had talked about the importance of having young firefighters be a part of this conversation. I had not put much thought into considering the importance of educating young and old firefighters about exposure and how it can increase cancer risk. However, this thought brought a story to mind I would like to share with you.
When I was at the training academy, Baltimore Electric and Gas came in with 55-gallon drums and said, "Hey, you guys want to burn this?" And of course, our response was, "Yeah, let's burn it!" It burned with vibrant colors. But looking back, the realization that we didn't know what was in those drums we were burning and what chemicals we had been exposed to.

I tell new firefighters to view exposure like fundraising. Imagine having one of those thermometer graphic posters used to measure fundraising efforts – you color in each section on the thermometer to indicate proximity to reaching your fundraising goals. In the fire service, you have to be aware of every exposure you have. We know about the particulates and various chemicals that are released when a fire burns that have been linked to cancer. And each exposure to these carcinogens have an accumulative effect increasing your cancer risk. Every time you go to a fire scene, you can start shading in your thermometer graphic, measuring the number of exposures accumulated over time and equate it to your increased cancer risk.

Firefighters often depend on leadership for an appraisal of the situation. So, it is essential that leadership is aware of potential exposure risk and communicates that with their team. You shouldn't have the right to be exposed to certain things – even if it is because ignorance or carelessness – you shouldn't have that right. Leaders in the fire service have to change that. And we are changing that. I don't want to sound gloom and doom. There are a lot of things that the fire service is doing right. Some brilliant people are doing some fantastic work in fire departments around this country. And we take notice. However, cancer is one of those areas we still need to do a better job addressing.
Behavioral health is another area that needs focus. Dennis Compton and I have spent significant time on behavioral health over the last couple of years. This has been probably one of the biggest challenges we have faced in the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), recently in health and safety. We published a full-featured story in a magazine discussing behavioral health in the fire service. We had a depressed-looking firefighter on the cover of our magazine. We told a story of how posttraumatic stress disorder impacts firefighters.

Our phones rang off the hook. New, seasoned, and retired firefighters started calling us up telling us they were ready to commit suicide. They would say things like, "You have just described exactly how I have been feeling, and I don't know what to do about it. What do I do? Where do I get help?" We began to grasp the enormity of this behavioral health issue in the fire service profession. We were aware of the spike in suicide and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) prevalence in the military. It turns out the fire service shares that struggle. And now we need to find a solution. This is an area the Fire Service must get better at. We have gotten better, but we must continue to improve. We need to continue to develop programs that look at the core issues that derive these negative consequences. What do we need to do? How do we need to address this problem?

New challenges are constantly arising for firefighters regarding behavioral health. Disaster and active shooter response can put firefighters at risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Companies are finding that those that teach organizational resilience and prioritize wellness are the ones that do better. The ability to anticipate, adapt and respond to incremental setbacks is an important skill all firefighters should invest effort building. Resources specifically tailored to the behavioral health needs of the firefighter are still limited, but many excellent programs have emerged to answer the call the IAFF Center for Excellence, a facility designed to treat firefighter mental health issues and substance abuse rehabilitation. To find out more information about the IAFF Center of Excellence, go to www.iaffrecoverycenter.com. Our goal is to get these firefighters back to work. Here are a few examples of the resources we provide:

- The Fire Service Hidden Secrets
- IAFF Wellness Fitness Initiative (WFI)
- Survivability of Fire Departments
Organizational Resilience

Around 800 firefighters have come to the IAFF Center for Excellence in Marlboro, Maryland, for behavioral health treatment. We never had this kind of resource before. We had difficulty even getting the certification. Going in, we didn't know if the program design was going to work. Substance abuse programs have been time-tested, but mental health issues programs follow a novel curriculum. About 40% of that 800 firefighters who have come to the IAFF Center come because of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The power of this IAFF Center for Excellence is it is firefighters helping firefighters. I go up there every two weeks to talk about issues. Now firefighters are even asking to start local programs.

The firefighters coming into these programs are so scared to ask for help because of the stigma that has permeated the fire service for so long. We must eliminate the fear associated with asking for help regarding behavioral health issues. This program is helping facilitate a much-needed cultural shift in the fire service.

It provides a place where firefighters can bond with other firefighters who have had similar experiences and hear, "Listen, this is a safe place. This is a place where you can get that help you need. You can get that."

I can only imagine how it was for firefighters in 1947. Back then, the stigma that you didn't cry was all the stronger. You didn't talk about behavioral health. You were expected to just suck it up.

I am happy to be witnessing the beginnings of a cultural shift in the fire service and look forward to when that stigma is eliminated across the board in the fire service. It's okay when you have a SIDS case to come back to the firehouse; and if you're upset, you have to cry. It's
okay that you might have to take some time to reflect on that. It is okay to talk to someone. It is okay to go and talk to a counselor. The safety and behavioral health of those in the fire service should be prioritized.

We have a lot of deficiencies. Employee assistant programs are broken across the country. We are working on it, but we are not working hard enough.

**Fire Service Joint Labor Management Wellness-Fitness Initiative**

I wanted to mention there are a couple of people out there that have done a lot of work on this. This is the IAFF Wellness-Fitness Initiative. We pieced the IAFF Wellness-Fitness Initiative starting with ten fire departments in 1996.

We got together ten fire chiefs. We had to find a big place for all of those egos. Taj Mahal was not available, so we settled for a small fire department. We actually got together and looked at what we need to do. We asked ourselves, “Can we do something positive? Can we start to screen? Can we get the medicals that we need for firefighters? What can we learn from those positive medicals? We came together to start talking about how we can improve quality of life for all uniformed personnel for the first time.

For the past 30 years, the IAFF Wellness-Fitness Initiative has been hard at work promoting the health of uniformed personnel – recruits, incumbents, and retirees. The program prioritizes medical evaluation, fitness, rehabilitation and injury prevention, behavioral health, and data collection. The success of this wellness program is attributed to its understanding of the holistic nature of health. Physical, mental, and emotional health are imperative to overall wellness.

There are two things that I want to identify. Firstly, I wanted to talk about the cost justification for the implementation of these programs. An effective program will minimize the expenditures on lost work time, workers compensation, and disability.

Secondly, even in the Fire Service, we have firefighters that are not getting an annual medical. That is just intolerable. We have to correct this. Every three weeks, a firefighter in a fire department in Boston, MA, is diagnosed with cancer. Every three weeks. Let that sink in. We have to take a look at that, and we are going to take a look at that.

Through data collection and analysis, participating departments will create an invaluable database which can be utilized throughout the fire service. A number of fire departments
throughout the United States and Canada have already developed wellness-fitness programs based on the IAFF Wellness-Fitness Initiative (WFI) (www.iaff.org/hs/wfiresource/default.html).

**New Challenges**

We also need to discuss behavioral health with new recruits early on. What is the message? How do we reach them? Often, new recruits come in and are given you the "this is what you're going to see, this is the critical incident, this is how you're going to respond, these are the things... So, this is a job, it's a tough job, you're going to see a lot of bad things, and we do" spill. We then push these young recruits into the firehouses, and that's all we do. We don't have, really, any kind of continual education in that behavioral health.

We are finding those firefighters who do better on certain calls (disasters, 9/11, etc.) were those who could talk and communicate. They had a post-incident discussion and maintained healthy relationships. They took care of themselves – diet, fitness, and sleep. It's a balanced recipe that must be continuously followed so that stress can be handled in a healthy way.

The fire service is always facing new challenges: active shooter incidents, wildfires, and Hurricane Irma, to name a few. The fire service is so busy continually finding solutions to outside problems. Now we need to address more intimate issues in the fire service and prioritize the health of firefighters – physical and mental.

All you have to do is ask firefighters to find something. For example, we had to get supplies over from the west coast to Key West for this conference, and these firefighters somehow found a ferry boat. We need to apply that innovation and determination to problem-solve to the new challenges the fire service is facing today.

Dr. Richard Brian, out of Australia, has done extensive research in regard to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). We sat down one day, and I asked him, "Richard, "Can we teach resilience in the fire service?"

Dr. Richard Brian said, "Pat, yes, you can teach resilience. Sometimes it is not as effective, you know, for several reasons."
I said, "What do you mean it's not as effective?"

Dr. Richard Brian said, "We have studied this throughout time. Those companies and corporations that do organizational resilience – that really understand all of those things that you need in an organization to handle those things that are going to come – are the ones that do better. Organizational resilience is the ability of an organization to anticipate, prepare for a response, and adapt to incremental and sudden distribution to survive and prosper. It is imperative to note resilience has to be throughout the whole organization, starting with the leadership to the recruitment class. A healthy organization, a healthy fire department that has all of that, really understands what the end goal is."

_Closing Thoughts_

In many ways, the fire service is a victim of its own success. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports more than 1,400 civilians died in fires in 2017. As a result, we get headlines in the mainstream media. Here is one in the Washington Post from 2015 – _Fewer Fires, So Why Are There Far More Firefighters?_ This article highlights firefighters living at the firehouse for a day or two and then taking three days off. While they are “working,” they are washing trucks, lifting weights, mopping floors and eating and sleeping. Readers were left with this: “Being a firefighter these days doesn’t involve a lot of fighting fire.”

There are two important things the media, public, the federal and state government, and local representatives need to understand. Firstly, the fire and emergency service are an all-hazards response industry. Secondly, fires are still a major problem in the United States.

Every 24 seconds, a fire department in the United States responds to a fire somewhere in the nation. The economic losses due to fire totals an estimated $14.9 billion. And home fires still cause the majority of all civilian fire deaths, civilian injuries, and property loss due to fire. This cost has stayed pretty steady since 1980.

I am going to close with a quote.

"If you want a friend in Washington, get a dog." - President Harry Truman
Leadership, specifically the areas of administration and command, are key elements – maybe among the most important – to preserving life and property from the threat of fire. In reviewing the resources provided for this important event, a January 1948 article from *Life* magazine caught my eye. The headline warned Americans that “Fire will kill nearly 1,000 people this month.” It talked about while firefighting experts and President Truman are committed to reducing loss of life and property due to fire, it takes public awareness and cooperation, as well. President Truman said, “The whole-hearted efforts of all of us together, and of each of us individually, can go far toward halting fire's mounting destruction of human life and property. I urge all of you to support the nationwide program of fire prevention.” His words were true then, and they are true today.

When dealing with the given topic of leadership and command, the 1947 report has many themes that ring true still today.

Firstly, consider revenue and economic deployment. The fire departments are expensive and are essential investments for a community. Fire service leaders must balance risk with the ability to adequately protect it. Integration and consolidation, as well as standardization, are tactics suggested to ease cost and stabilize the civic investment of local government. Secondly, the economics of fire protection, or put more simply, the number of companies needed to perform the work, is still the source of much debate and discussion. Thirdly, the expanding mission and demands of the fire service are still a balancing act. As stated in the 1947 *President's Conference on Fire Prevention* report, “A superior fire officer must have diversified knowledge, much of which is technical”.

*Leadership: Administration and Command*

Chief Tom Jenkins, Rogers (AR) Fire Department; 2018-2019 President, International Association of Fire Chiefs
Since 1948, in many ways the fire service has become a victim of its own success. The National Fire Protection Association reported 3,400 civilians died in fires in 2017. As a result, we get headlines in the mainstream media such as this one from 2015 in the *Washington Post*, *Fewer Fires, So Why are There Far More Firefighters?* This article tells about firefighters living at the firehouse for a day or two and then taking three days off. They talked about how firefighters are “working” saying they wash trucks, lift weights, mop floors, eat, and sleep. Readers were left with this: “Being a firefighter these days doesn’t involve a lot of fighting fire.”

[Image of a page from the *Washington Post* article titled “2015: “Fewer fire, so why are there far more firefighters?”"

By Fred S. McChesney
September 4, 2015

Fred S. McChesney is a professor of law and economics at the University of Miami who studies the intersection of economics and public institutions.

If you want to chat with a firefighter or see a fire truck up close, you can go down to the local firehouse at any time of day. The crew will probably be there, lifting weights or washing down the already gleaming red engines. Career firefighters usually live at the firehouse for a day or two, then take as many as three days off. Between eating and sleeping at the station, they mop floors, clean toilets and landscape the yard — with a few hours set aside daily for training and drills. Mid-morning, you’ll find several of them at the local supermarket doing the day’s grocery shopping.

In other words, being a firefighter these days doesn’t involve a lot of fighting fire.

There are two important things the media, our federal, state, and local representatives and the public need to understand. Firstly, the fire and emergency service is an all-hazards response industry. Secondly, the United States still has a major fire problem. Every 24 seconds, a fire department in the United States responds to a fire somewhere in the nation. Home fires still cause the majority of all civilian fire deaths, civilian injuries and property loss due to fire. The economic losses due to fire totals an estimated $14.9 billion. This cost has stayed pretty steady over the past forty years!
As the immediate past president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I am proud that the IAFC represents the leadership of fire and emergency service responders worldwide. Our members are the world’s leading experts in firefighting, EMS, terrorism response, hazmat response, wildland fire suppression, natural disasters, search and rescue, and public-safety policy. Our mission is to lead, educate, and serve the fire and emergency service in North America and across the globe.

A predecessor of mine, Fire Chief Charles Delaney of the Lakewood, Ohio, Fire Department – who incidentally died as a result of fighting a fire at the age of 59, spoke these words in the 1947 report, “The vast number of fire chiefs attending this Conference is concrete evidence that the public fire protection services are ready to do their part and discharge their duty in every respect. However, in many instances fire departments are sorely handicapped due to insufficient personnel, obsolete and unreliable apparatus, worn-out fire hose, and personnel discontented because of inadequate rates of pay, undesirable working conditions, unsuitable quarters, and lack of modern appliances for the extinguishment of fire and for the protection of the firefighting forces.”

- Charles A. Delaney President, International Association of Fire Chiefs

In many ways, we have come far since Chief Delaney uttered these words some seventy-years ago. However, we still have far to go. As it relates to administration and leadership, I would say we have made incredible leaps. However, much of those leaps have been complicated by the mission expansion of the fire department.

Financing fire departments remains a top-level issue. Substantial federal involvement in traditional municipal fire departments remained largely unchanged until the passage of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program almost two decades ago. Governmental entities still struggle to adequately fund and support fire departments and turn to alternative revenue sources to supplement conventional revenue streams. This issue becomes even more complicated in the volunteer fire service, which constitutes an endangered two-thirds of firefighters across the United States.

Incident command and control is a true grassroots success story. Natural evolution of incident control gained momentum in the 1970s as the result of large wildland-urban interface
incidents. Elements of the Fire Ground Command System and FIRESCOPE ICS would eventually be galvanized by the Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5 into NIMS – The National Incident Management System. This system has improved synergy with allied emergency response organizations and has helped with collaboration at many levels.

The National Fire Academy, along with other leadership programs offered by a wide array of institutions have made access to education and training for administration and command realistic. Since the creation of the National Fire Academy by the United States Fire Administration with the passage of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, the training of fire officers has increased dramatically. It isn’t uncommon for well over 100,000 students to be trained each year at both the National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute.

Deployment for fire ground operations has been the focus of significant research and documentation. In 2001, NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720, the standards for organization and deployment of fire department operations in career and volunteer departments, were adopted. Their adoption standardized the expectation for quantity, type, and timeliness of emergency response resources when responding to structural fires and medical emergencies. Over the years, the standard has evolved to include high-rise, garden style apartments, and strip mall deployment objectives, as well.

This standard for the staffing requirements to meet the critical tasking needs of fires in residential and high-rise structures is supported by research by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in 2010 and 2013. This large-scale empirical research provides our industry with science to back up our deployment decisions – something that was not afforded to the fire service in 1947.

As many of us know, a fire chief’s job is both ON and OFF the fire ground. The administration and command role fire chiefs play have a critical impact on any fire department’s performance. While gaps and opportunities for improvement still exist, our profession should stand proud that we’ve made a dangerous career safer and reduced the number of civilians that die from fire by nearly 75% since that January 1948 Life magazine was published.

Going forward, our 30,000 plus fire departments must continue to respect their tradition and individuality, while harnessing opportunities to standardize and introduce best practices. Balancing the ever-present risk of fire, must be done while continuing to expand and improve our all-hazards attitude. Our name is a misnomer, and our mission will continue to expand well beyond our traditional firefighting DNA. We must get in front of change and embrace hazards and solutions to public safety problems that push us outside our comfort zone.

While our mission may expand, it is unlikely that our revenue streams will too. Technology should continue to be explored to make evidence-based deployment decisions or to conquer problems that previously were too complex to solve. Data, as you will likely hear again, is our friend.
Decisions are made based on the data we create. It’s imperative for future leadership to see data as a friend and not a foe. Data can be used to help keep firefighters and the public safe and to provide for first class administration and command.
Firefighting Services: Service Delivery and the Impact on Recruitment and Retention

Chief Kevin Quinn, 1st Vice Chair, National Volunteer Fire Council Board of Directors

Good afternoon. My name is Kevin D. Quinn and I’m the First Vice Chair of the National Volunteer Fire Council. I’m honored to be here today.

“So, you want to be a fireman?” This question was posed by my mother to me many years ago as our family stood on the open porch of our home in the small town where I lived. For the greater part of a memorable night we watched the entire business section of that community burn to the ground. It made an indelible impression upon my memory.

As the Honorable Clarence Meadows, Governor of West Virginia, said, “That urge seizes most of us in our youth and never quite leaves – no matter how old we may grow. There is something wrong with almost any American who does not possess a secret desire to don the coat and boots and hat of a fireman and go charging down the street to the scene of a conflagration.”

The idea of being a firefighter and helping others is a nostalgic notion that has crossed many youths’ minds. Once you respond to a call as a firefighter, it is in your blood and bones. It is who you are, and you will forever be changed.

The Committee on Firefighting Services noted in the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report that at least 15,000 fire department are part-paid and volunteer. It also said, “When industrial and living conditions were simpler, firemen learned through experience on the job. Little attention was given to organized systematic training. However, in recent years demands upon the fire service have made it imperative that all members of fire departments be trained for their work sufficiently to enable them to utilize the results of technical progress. The more complicated living and working conditions become, the more there is to know about fire prevention and firefighting.”

“I want to pay a tribute to our firemen. Was it not for their bravery and their willingness to sacrifice, our death toll would be much higher and our losses even more appalling than they are today? I hope that this conference will help to produce conditions that will make our firemen’s dangerous work less necessary, and their services, when needed, of even greater effectiveness.”

- The President’s Conference on Fire Prevention, 1947
The report went on to say, “There are...an estimated 725,000 volunteer firemen in America. This makes a total of around 800,000 municipal firemen - that is, persons engaged in protecting cities, towns, villages and small rural communities in which publicly operated fire departments are maintained.”

At the time of this report, careers in the trades were prevalent in our country. Jobs were more hands-on which led to a natural progression when one wanted to become a volunteer firefighter. They already had some of the experience necessary.

Fire departments often have to fight inside buildings under great difficulties. This task requires training, because under normal working conditions a fireman obtains real firefighting experience only at difficult fires. Organized systematic training for firemen, starting with a few drill schools in fire departments in the United States more than 60 years ago, has made great advances in recent years. By 1925, the first three-day course for firemen was held at the Universities of Illinois and Iowa.

The report stressed the need for hands-on training and education for our firefighters. Numerous standards for rural fire department service have been compiled by the various interested groups; but those published by the National Fire Protection Association in the pamphlet, “Volunteer Fire Departments for Rural and Small Communities,” combine, through its Committee on Farm Fire Protection, the well-thought-out ideas of each of these groups. To give satisfactory protection, a rural fire department service must consist of the same fundamental facilities that go into the make-up of a city fire department service.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards layout the recommended minimum standards for career and volunteer fire departments. Truman had the vision that all departments were equal so that adequate fire protection could be provided regardless of who responded and whether it was in an urban, suburban or rural location.

Private volunteer fire departments sooner or later are likely to call upon governmental bodies to appropriate funds for equipment, maintenance, and other expenses. This tendency should be encouraged, to place fire protection on a more permanent and more practical basis. Laws of some states prescribe the method of organizing volunteer fire departments and require them to be under the direction of some governmental body.

Truman encouraged the idea that the government should aid in the funding of equipment and the expense of firefighting.

What is Happening Today? Since 1946, population has more than doubled from 143 million people to 327 million people. Fires have increased from 830,000 fires in 1946 to 1,319,500 fires in 2017. The number of volunteer firefighters has decreased from 725,000 firefighters to 682,600 firefighters today. The total number of career firefighters has increased from 75,000 firefighters to 373,600 firefighters. The total number of firefighters has increased from 800,000 firefighters in 1946 to 1,056,200 firefighters today. The number of fire departments in 1946 was
15,000 fire departments compared to the 30,000 fire departments we have today. “Firemen” in 1946 are now known as “firefighters” today; more females are in the service, and they are a valuable addition.

The population has more than doubled since 1946 while the number of volunteer firefighters has decreased, and career firefighters have increased. The number of fires has increased. The fire service today is more diverse with more females serving. Women now comprise 7% of the fire service, which is why we use the term “firefighter” today. The culture is shifting, and everyone is welcome to join the fire service.

What has been done since 1947? The fire service responds to all-hazards. Fire departments and Fire Corps have taken on more of the fire prevention role. There are training standard for departments and state training academies.

There are standards. Volunteer and career firefighters adhere to NFPA standards. There are more standards on emerging issues such as active shooter incidents and EMS calls. Standards have changed for volunteer fire service participation and volunteer fire departments. Many are separate 501(c)3 organizations now and fundraise on their own. The state and federal government now provide funding through Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program and Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant program.

The fire service responds to all-hazards which include natural and man-made disasters, EMS, hazardous materials, and terrorism. The fire service has also taken on the fire prevention role in the community with visits to schools. Citizens are encouraged to join their fire department in non-operational roles, such as Fire Corps, to aid in the teaching of fire prevention. Training is critical for the health and safety of our firefighters so that they can protect the lives and property of those they serve. Training has increased to include the all-hazards approach and includes fire prevention.

NFPA recommended minimum standards elevate the professional level of the fire service. More standards are developed based on emerging issues such as Active Shooter, EMS, and drones. The NVFC and the volunteer fire service play an active role in the standards making process by serving on NFPA committees and the NFPA board.

Volunteer fire departments today are being asked to do more. Many are separate corporations and do their own fundraising. They also have to rely on the local municipalities for funding and there is also typically state funding available. Federal funding through the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response have been particularly popular and beneficial.

What Needs to be Done in the Future? Fire prevention is critical to decreasing fire-related deaths, property loss and firefighter death and injury. More emphasis should be placed on fire prevention throughout our Nation. The fire service increasingly is an all-hazards response industry. EMS calls comprise the majority of a department’s response...and as the bulk of our
population ages, EMS calls are expected to increase. The number of volunteer firefighters has decreased while call volume has tripled in the last thirty years. Recruiting the next generation is critical to the health and safety of those who serve others. Recruitment of the next generation needs to be a priority.

Now, let me summarize the key takeaways for you. The population of the United States has more than doubled and continues to increase with the average life expectancy increasing. Fires in the United States have increased since 1947. Volunteer firefighters have slightly decreased, and career firefighters have increased. Fire prevention is a critical element in decreasing fire loss. The fire service responds to all-hazards and receive more training than ever before. More training is required and available. It’s critical that we recruit the next generation of the fire service to meet these demanding needs. Thank you.
Panel 3: The Future of President Truman’s Legacy

Research
Steve Kerber, Director, UL Firefighter Safety Research Institute

Good afternoon, my name is Steve Kerber. I am the Director of the Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) Firefighter Safety Research Institute. I have the pleasure to share with you my thoughts on the past, present, and future of fire research. I would like to extend my appreciation to the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, and the National Fire Sprinkler Association for making this wonderful event possible.

Once I started to read the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report, I knew UL Firefighter Safety Research Institute had to be involved.

Pictured here is Alvah Small, the President of UL in 1947, and his invitation letter to serve as the Secretary of the Committee on Research. UL is celebrating 125 years of working for a safer world this year, and we are still committed to fire safety research.

President Truman said in the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Protection report, “The serious losses in life and property resulting annually from fires cause me deep concern. I am sure that such unnecessary waste can be reduced. The substantial progress made in the science of fire prevention and fire protection in this country during the past 40 years convinces me that the means are available for limiting this unnecessary destruction.”
I want to draw your attention to his words, “the science of fire prevention and fire protection”. This acknowledgement in 1947 was incredibly visionary and has laid the foundation for decades of progress.

The committee on research submitted recommendations on eight topics.

1. Bibliography: A central library facility for which reports on all aspects of firefighting, fire prevention, and fire loss. The report included an excellent quote from an unknown author, “Facts hidden away in a filing cabinet (or hidden in our minds) are of little practical value; only when they are made available to people can they be translated into action.” Fire prevention in its modern aspects is more than an art but scientific application of most of its branches is sadly hampered by a bibliography and contributions from all sources. They wanted to make sure that research on fire problems will be guided without duplication of planning or experiments.
2. Human Behavior:
   a. Educate the public about fire to reduce stress and minimize the chance of panic behavior. The Cocoanut Grove Fire and the circus disaster in Hartford resulted in a waste of life due to panic behavior induced by fear of fire. They felt this could be combatted with knowledge on fire shared with the public via press and radio.
   
   b. Standardize the selection and screening of firemen. Utilize psychological screening methods that were successful in selecting soldiers for the war and apply it to the fire service. Choose those that are stable, think clearly in emergencies and function quickly. Not those that are inferior, the psychopath, the introvert, the manic depressive and others with instabilities.
   
   c. Examine and hospitalize pyromaniacs to protect the public. They provided some fascinating statistics, “Statistics currently available point to the fact that about 48% of pathological fire setters are imbeciles or morons, and another 22 percent are dull normal or borderline while 17 percent are of superior intelligence.”

3. Fires on Shipboard: Establish an organization to bring Maritime, allied industry and government together. Learn from Navy Firefighter Schools by making training available to the public fire service, civilians from industry and all personnel in the Merchant Marine. The success of the Navy firefighter training schools developed during World War II is well known and is commended by every fire prevention and firefighting official.

4. Aviation: Create an industry wide committee to study training of flight crews, modernize airports, study airport crash protection and adequately regulate flying over areas of special hazard to life and property. They highlighted three main phases of research activity: Design, construction, and operation of aircraft. Design, construction, and operation of airports and airport buildings. Crash fire protection.
5. Industrial Research: Research to protect people, processes and materials that fuel the economy. They suggested Research on building materials, hazardous materials, firefighter safety, flammable liquids, etc.

6. Firefighting (extinguishing) Equipment: Endorse research on the use of water for suppression and acknowledgment of oxygen depletion as another method. They acknowledged that automatic operation is generally most effective, overcoming certain aspects of human behavior that cause detection and warning of fire to be too late. For about 75 years the automatic sprinkler system has performed outstandingly as a fire extinguishing method well adapted to safe-guarding life and property in industrial and commercial premises, on shipboard, theatre stages, in strategic parts of hotels, and other places of public assembly and housing. In this case 75 years would have dated back well into the 1800s. Forest, Brush and Wildland Fires: endorsement of national, state, local government, and civilian programs for forest fire, brush fire, and wildland fire prevention and fire control. Outstanding research areas include: Equipment development, Weather forecasting, Firefighting from the air, Field organizations for firefighting, Prediction of lightning fires, Fire extinguishing agents, and Fire prevention methods. First mention of wetting agents.

7. Mine Fire Prevention: endorsement of national, state, local government, and civilian programs for mine fire prevention. Concern with waste of our created wealth and resources from fire must not result in ignoring the hazards to life and property that exist in preventable mine fires. The products of research in each of these phases are urgently needed, drawing from all fields of technological development and taking many forms.
There has been significant progress in fire research since 1947; however, it did not come easy or well-funded. With a limited time to speak with you, I tried to limit this discussion to the very high-level events and accomplishments:

- In 1950 to 1970, the Flammable Fabrics Act led to fabric flammability research. The Fire Research & Safety Act of 1968 created a new National Commission which led to research into modern technology to fight fires, firefighter tools, and equipment and the expansion of fire resistance research.

- In 1970 to 1990, the Federal Fire Prevention & Control Act (1974) created the Fire Research Center at NBS, Residential Smoke Alarms and Sprinklers (NFPA 13D published in 1975), Oxygen Consumption Calorimetry, Bi-directional Probes, test methods for smoke & flame spread (other than the tunnel), the cone calorimeter, firefighter PPE research, and furniture flammability research.

- In 1980 to 2000, there was impressive progress on understanding the component phenomena on fire. Fire modeling advancements in HAZARD I, CFAST, FDS, led to performance-based design. Introduction to Fire Dynamics is published in 1985 and SFPE Handbook is published in 1988.

- 2000 to present, the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program reinvigorated fire research for the fire service, fire dynamics, health & safety, and technology.

With all of that progress, there are many fire safety challenges currently being researched around the world. Some additional challenges are still emerging and are going to need to be researched in order for us to continue to work toward a fire safe world. There remains a significant need to increase the knowledge base of the entire fire community – from the public to the fire service to fire investigators to fire safety engineers.

Everyone needs better science-based education and ongoing research to be able to perform their duties and combat the fire problem. Fire science is still a relatively young science and there is still much to learn including some fundamentals. I want to start with the research needs of the fire service as that is a passion of mine. Every day we are learning more about the tactics the fire service utilizes on a daily basis and the impact they have on fire dynamics and life safety.

Excellent health research on topics such as chemical exposure that has been proven to increase the cancer rates of the fire service, diet, mental health and cardiovascular strain is making progress, but it has a long way to go. Research on topics such as wildland urban interface is ramping up and needs to continue as an increased number of lives and property are being lost. Additional advances in fire service technology needs research to be properly implemented in the field. It is not right to try new tools without fully understanding the benefits and limitations of them. They should not be deployed when lives are on the line, those of the public and the fire service. Finally, the fire services workplace has been evolving and will continue to evolve
forever. Research is critical to make sure the fire service is as prepared as possible to tackle those challenges before emergencies occur. The fire service needs to be part of the conversation as new materials are used to build buildings, to furnish buildings, to power buildings and to operate buildings. Having firefighters respond to an emergency to solve a problem without the knowledge on how to mitigate that emergency because the research has not been conducted is criminal.

The fire investigation community also has several research needs. The same evolution of work environment that impact the fire service also challenges the fire investigators. Pattern analysis necessary to accurately determine cause and origin needs additional research. The entire process including protocols and reducing bias will improve with research.

Fire Engineering Research has several topics of research that need to continue to expand. Human Behavior, New Building Techniques, Economic Impacts, Fire Modelling, Next Generation Fire Protection Systems.

Big Data remains a blue-sky topic for the fire community with tools being developed and expanded that could yield much needed insight into areas of fire prevention, response and mitigation. The fields of AI, Machine Learning, and Predictive Analytics will be leveraged to save lives.

Research on the Impact of changing demographics including an aging population and urbanization on fire safety needs to expand. In some cases, answers are known; however, the most effective way to implement the findings requires additional research.

Residential fires are the majority of fires and fire deaths. Economy drives how buildings are constructed, what they are constructed of, and what safety systems are used and how people live. Renters in the basement, multiple families in a single house, and pods in back yards are all challenges that require additional research.

There is a lack of coordinated fire research effort by the federal government. In the 1970s-1980s, the Center for Fire Research did this. It was a program that coordinated several government agencies, grants with Universities, and guest researchers from industry. Today the federal efforts are more limited and segmented than a generation ago.

The last 70 years have yielded tremendous progress in fire safety research but let us reexamine the topics identified by the committee on research in 1947. Even with new technology, bibliography remains a challenge. Many libraries with fire knowledge and history are going away. While online resources are available, they are incomplete with information from the past 25 years or less. Today research and impacts are limited by the “pay-per-view” peer-reviewed journal system. In the past these articles were available through a network of brick and mortar libraries. Human behavior will always evolve and remain a challenge. Fire will never happen to them. Shipboard and Aviation: New technology creates new research challenges such as transporting lithium ion batteries. There are new processes, new chemicals, significant
potential losses, high-rise and automated storage systems in industrial research. Firefighting equipment is still a concern. While water still puts out fire and oxygen depletion slow fire spread this is not universally understood or applied. Wildland (WUI) issues are more challenging than ever. Mine fire prevention is also an issue of concern. There have been 150 mine fires since 2000 and 2 fatalities in 2006 due to a fire in a West Virginia mine.

President Truman’s quote in 1947 is as applicable today as it was in 1947. As the world evolves, fire safety research and implementation has to evolve as well in order to eliminate the serious losses in life and property. A solid foundation has been laid but there is much work to do. In many cases it is simply acting on what the research and science prove that is the most difficult. To my fire safety colleagues, thank you for your dedication and partnership. To the Truman Foundation members, please help us reinvigorate President Truman’s cause of reducing the unwanted loss from fire because it is still at unacceptable levels and we can do better together.
It is my honor to be here today to present to those gathered the evolution of Data in the Fire Service. Data by definition are the facts and statistics collected together for reference or analysis including the quantities, characters, or symbols on which operations are performed by a human or a computer, then stored and transmitted in the form of electrical signals and recorded on magnetic, optical, or mechanical recording media. The evolution of data in the fire service can easily be followed chronologically through the historic reports compiled from high-profile meetings addressed here today.

**1948 Report to President Truman**

Given that data as a concept was not a common topic of discussion, the word data does not occur in the early report to President Truman. There are, however, references to statistics regarding the causes of fires and the related loss of human life. There are also references to work performed by informal groups that were to report from time to time regarding their findings and recommendations on the same two topics... causes of fire and the associated loss of human life.

The original conference also published and distributed a pamphlet entitled “A Guide to Community Organization for Fire Safety.” This pamphlet, that apparently included actionable items along with the reports from the committee meetings at the Conference, was said “to be developed by the best intelligence in this field that the country affords”. There were follow on reports in 1948 noting “truly remarkable progress...evidenced by the ‘records of activities’ in continuation of the recommendations in each of the forty-eight states” ... so data, though not mentioned directly, were very much a part of the Truman report.

**America Burning**

In the *America Burning* report in 1973, the Commission recommended that a national fire data system be established to provide a continuing review and analysis of the entire fire problem. For the fire and emergency service, the system established for data collection and analysis was the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

**Wingspread III**
In 1986, the *Wingspread III* report noted that analyzing America’s fire problem requires a more effective system of data collection. The report stated that, “Though considerable progress has been made in identifying the type of data that are necessary to better assess the nation’s fire problem and recognizing that the NFPA and the United States Fire Administration have contributed to a better understanding of these data needs, a coordinated national system of data collection is required to better understand and cope with the nation’s fire problem”.

**Wingspread IV**

In the 1996 *Wingspread IV* report, it was noted that the NFIRS system would be revised, and the revision was to include modules for emergency medical responses, hazardous materials, and wildland fire response data. The report noted that the NFIRS system did not enjoy the benefit of full fire service participation for several reasons. A quote from the report stated, “Until the fire service can produce the data equivalent and accuracy of the Uniform Crime Report, they will continue to lag behind, never able to accurately characterize or articulate the challenges they have met or will face”.

The *Wingspread IV* report further noted a need for an improved NFIRS system, stating that the new system must address several issues.

There is a need to clarify the collection requirements. We need to rid the system of those current data elements and codes that are no longer relevant, are so confusing or burdensome that they diminish the likelihood of completing an accurate data entry and can be derived from other information.

The revised system should simplify the forms and clarify and simplify the rules for completion of paper and automated forms. It should accommodate local information needs recognizing that federal, state, and local information needs are not the same. It was agreed that participation would be encouraged if diverse needs are accommodated in a single system. Finally, it was recommended that the revised system should expand the breadth of the system to all incidents to document the full range of fire department activities.

The report also stated that the data system should collect data relevant to incident suppression and mitigation. This recommendation was important since the NFIRS system was not designed by the fire service or those who used incident data and even today many parts of the data collected in the system are not used. The *Wingspread IV* report also noted that parts of the NFIRS system were imperfectly designed, leading to poor utilization for analysis or prevention programs. A revised system must produce summary-based data and analysis, as well as task level needs analysis. While the NFIRS system will produce analyzed data locally, communities participating in NFIRS should automatically receive data, based on broad data sets, formatted in a standard format, upon which they can make strategic decisions. Special data analysis should also be available upon request of participants at minimum cost. The report stated that “Data poorly produced or improperly presented is damaging”. The report concluded that federal,
state, and local training organizations should provide training in the use, production, and analysis of data.

Finally, the Wingspread IV report recognized other sources of fire data that may be useful. For example, the annual Fire Departments Survey of Major Fire Losses and the Firefighter Injury and Death statistics were available from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the Death and Injury Survey was available from the International Association of Fire Fighters. The report also recommended that the National Fire Academy should conduct a bi-annual national survey to determine current staffing levels, equipment operated, fiscal data, work hours, shift patterns, training, education and inspection achievements, and other relevant fire service information.

**2005 NFFF National Fire Service Research Agenda**

The 2005 Research Agenda made the initiative to *Capture Data to Determine Firefighter Exposure to Fire Problems* a “Priority 1/Critical” initiative, noting the lack of data needed to document career or volunteer exposures.

The Agenda also placed *Data Requirements for Quality Fire Safety Decisions* as a “top-level Priority 1 need”, promoting a project to examine the value of documentation to fire departments and the use of data in planning and execution efforts. The Agenda encouraged efforts directed toward tools or methods that would encourage fire departments to collect, report and utilize data more effectively.

The 2005 Agenda listed *Data Sharing Opportunities* as “Priority 2”, deemed important as it was unknown what other valuable information could be available and accessible to fire departments. Participants recognized that local fire departments had limited ability to analyze local or comparative data. The participants recommended that it be determined “who has what data, how it could be obtained and shared and how it could enhance the quality and timeliness of information” back to the field. Participants also recommended that analytical tools be identified or developed to make effective use of shared data.

This report also presumed a lack of commitment to prevention as part of the overall fire problem, but there were no data on the overall prevention effort. There was also a presumption that effective public education and awareness programs resulted in more fires being extinguished in the incipient stage and not being reported, but again there were no data to confirm this presumption.

Fire ground factors that contribute to firefighter injuries and fatalities, along with firefighter fatalities and injuries involving motor vehicle accidents were listed as Priority 1. These topics were deemed urgent and critical noting; however, that such a project must involve an effort to obtain and conduct extensive analysis of data that had not yet been compiled.
Other Priority 1 level items in the 2005 Agenda recognized the rapidly expanding data resources that can be obtained from building systems, GIS systems, traffic cameras, surveillance systems and similar systems to enhance the effectiveness and safety of emergency operations. This Priority 1 objective included analysis of user needs, technological capabilities and interoperability issues involved in providing useful information to the incident commander from multiple data sources.

In this meeting, there was an awakening. The participants recognized that tremendous quantities of potentially useful information existed in a variety of technological infrastructures. Potential uses for this information included pre-incident planning, real-time monitoring of building systems, operations resource tracking, response routing and remote monitoring of complex situations. However, these data sources must be located, accessed and assembled to be effectively used in emergency operations.

**Wingspread V**

In 2006, the *Wingspread V* report noted deployment standards provide a useful start in determining the effectiveness of fire service response. They highlight fire service operations, by which fire chiefs, elected officials, and customers can judge how well, or poorly local fire departments provide services. Properly organized, deployment statistics allow chiefs and elected officials to identify problems and suggest solutions. New technologies will enable fire agencies to collect relevant data on operations and thus create new criteria for evaluation. By sharing their experiences, fire departments can assist in the establishment of better deployment standards and thus in enhancing professionalism in the fire service.

The *Wingspread V* report also noted that the U.S. fire and emergency services must have an awareness of and use the data from “smart” technology (e.g. smart building, smart city, smart vehicle, and homeland security-related), which can provide real-time access to pertinent information.


Data are also addressed in the Firefighter Life Safety Report – Emergency Vehicles Summit noting that there is a need for more comprehensive reporting and analysis of emergency vehicle accident data. The analysis should examine rates and causal factors, as well as the impact on emergency responders and civilians and associated costs.

**Firefighter Life Safety Report-Novato**

In 2007, the Novato report recommended that fire departments collect and analyze demographic data and incident/risk data to identify target populations and establish priorities for Fire and Life Safety Education programs. The report noted that the most important reason for investigating accidents, injuries, fatalities and near miss occurrences is to focus efforts on preventing recurrences.
The report also recommended that a national research agenda and data collection system be created relating to the Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. As a final note, the report suggested that the USFA support and encourage participation in NFIRS through incentives and that reporting, and coding should be simplified.

**2011 NFFF National Fire Service Research Agenda**

In the 2011 NFFF Research agenda, the word data inundated the report. The report addressed the need for identification of cultural perceptions of data collection and barriers to quality data capture. There was recognition of the lack of commitment, leadership, motivation, training, value, and accountability when it came to data entry.

There was a call to identify and catalog data sources and data technology formats beneficial to the fire service to create synergy to investigate linkages between known databases.

The #1 priority was the lack of a systematic, coordinated process for collecting, organizing and disseminating data noting that this is a pervasive issue through all domains of fire service research. The highest-ranking recommendation from the Data Needs group was to develop an intuitive data collection system prototype, including standardized data elements, definitions, metrics, and reports. The need for a consistent intuitive data entry system that is user friendly, lessens the burden during entry, encourages greater participation and ensures integrated quality control. There is also a need to identify and describe the absolute data needs in the fire service. “Nice to know” information should be honed and eliminated.

The report noted the need for the creation of tools to assist company officers and the incident commander with risk assessments. These tools would guide and support development and implementation of the incident action plan and will promote pre-plan efforts in every fire department.

**NFORS: The National Fire Operations Reporting System**

In 2012, funded by Assistance to Firefighters Grants, a national fire service research collaborative including the International Fire Chiefs Association, the International Fire Fighters Association, the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, Underwriters Laboratory UL FSRI, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Urban Institute, the University of Texas (Austin), and the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, began work to build the data system with attributes described in the previous reports.

Welcome to the new world of NFORS, the National Fire Operations Reporting System. NFORS uses technology to capture data from computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems or records management systems (RMS) and analyze that data to provide resources and operations insights for chief officers and the rank and file. At the policy making level, NFORS is a fire service analytical system and the most comprehensive way to get accurate and real-time information
to help fire service leaders assure adequate fire resources; optimize fire operations; reduce firefighter injury and death; minimize civilian injury and death; and minimize property loss.

NFORS does more than just report the details of the incident, it digs deeper into operations to provide a richer and fuller analysis. Fire Department leaders need more information than the response time and how many people arrived on the scene. They need to know what the environment was like when firefighters arrived. What did firefighters do on scene? What was the engagement with the fire? What toxic materials were encountered?

**America Burning Recommissioned**

In 2013, *America Burning Recommissioned* addressed the Acquisition and Analysis of Data noting that a large quantity of data exists but the quality and usefulness of these data have been questioned. The Commission further stated that it is unaware that the data collected are effective for advancing or achieving the prevention goals of the fire prevention and services community. Additionally, there is no central center or focus for the analysis of data that are collected. The fire and emergency services community need a central, national data center on which to rely for the collection and analysis of data. For such a center to be effective in this role, all regions and states should participate in and contribute to the collection of relevant data. Data that are collected by any institution or organization should have utility, in both form and substance, with the data that are collected by other entities. The data received by the center should be available to outside sources.

**Firefighter Life Safety Report-Tampa2 Report**

In 2014, Among the many recommendations and initiatives, the *Firefighter Life Safety Report – Tampa 2* recommended the establishment of a national fire service database for reporting behavioral health needs, training gaps and operational successes. This report also noted that valuable data and research are not widely disseminated or applied, making several recommendations to disseminate information in creative, accessible ways emphasizing the importance and use of data for effective decision-making at all levels. The recommendations included;

- Establishing a clearinghouse for the coordination of data, research and technology.
- Advocacy for the inclusion of research findings in academic coursework.
- Develop a clearinghouse for resources, sample policies and templates for validated training programs and delivery mechanisms.
- Overhaul NFIRS to improve reporting consistency and the accuracy of data.
- Create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives.
- Improve injury reporting by developing common definitions and establishing a central database for injuries.
- Enhance near-miss reporting.
- Improve statistical analysis of LODD trends to better identify what’s causing/contributing to LODDs.
- Make data accessible to those in the field.

**2015 NFFF National Fire Service Research Agenda**

At the 2015 NFFF National Fire Service Research Agenda, data was consistently mentioned in High Priority recommendations with a clear message to continue progress toward the development and refinement of enhanced data systems such as The National Fire Operations Reporting System known as NFORS across all fire service domains.

**Presenting FireCARES (The Community Assessment/Response Evaluation System):**

FireCARES is a system designed to assist community leaders to better understand how safe they are based on a risk score, a performance score and safe grade that compares the fire department to industry operations standards. FireCARES uses big data analytics to provide a basic understanding of how changes in the levels of emergency resources deployed affect outcomes from emergencies.

Prior to an incident, risks should be assessed, and appropriate resources made available to respond to emergencies when they occur. Cost effective resource decisions require information on the cost/benefit of resource investments. This information includes the number/location of fire stations, number, type, and location of fire apparatus, crew size, and pre-planned alarm assignments. Resource allocation may also address community infrastructure such as roads, telecommunication systems, water/hydrants, utilities, hospitals, schools and target hazards. Fire department response capability and capacity are a function of the community’s resource allocation and affect community vulnerability to fires and other emergencies. All these data resources and analytics are included in FireCARES.

It is generally accepted that the risks of negative outcomes rise when fire department resources do not match community needs. FireCARES provides decision makers a way to assess how well fire department resources deployed match community risks, thereby decreasing vulnerability to bad outcomes from fire and other emergencies.

**Wingspread VI**

In 2016, the Wingspread VI report stated that the United States fire and emergency services must develop an efficient and effective process to collect and manage data. The major national fire/rescue service organizations should meet and confer to determine the best national receiving agency to receive and analyze the data.
Introducing the International Public Safety Data Institute (IPSDI) (www.i-psdi.org)

In 2018, a new international non-profit organization was formed to help local fire departments gather, organize and translate big data to improve how they evaluate risks, deploy resources, and respond to fires and other emergencies. The International Public Safety Data Institute (IPSDI) — the new parent organization of FireCARES and the National Fire Operations Reporting System (NFORS) — is a collaborative of national fire service organizations and serves as the leading research, development and training organization focused on using data science to provide analytical tools and information to the public safety sector.

The IPSDI procures, assembles, analyzes, and reports information from fire and rescue data then presents that information through live dashboards for local public safety agencies. The information is used to improve how these agencies evaluate risks, deploy resources, and respond to emergencies. The IPSDI enables fire departments to gather, organize, and translate data into actionable insights.

NFORS Firefighter Exposure Tracking Mobile App

In 2019, the NFORS team added a Firefighter Exposure Tracking Mobile App to the NFORS Suite. To the fire officer, firefighter and paramedic responding, the NFORS Exposure Module is a personal database providing a detailed history of their work and exposures in a private, encrypted, secure online environment, all available on a mobile device. The NFORS Exposure App becomes a firefighter career diary to assure evidence of career exposures, should physical or behavioral health issues arise long-term or even in retirement.

As more governments enact presumptive legislation providing worker’s compensation coverage for firefighters who get cancer or have PTSD, the NFORS Personal Exposure Record will help provide the needed evidence to show work related exposure. Today many firefighters struggle to gather the evidence that on-the-job toxic exposures are linked to their cancer. Now all of the information can be stored in one place.

Closing Statement

Data, and the knowledge it contains, will continue to be the lifeblood of intelligent fire service leadership, operations, prevention, and responder health and safety... offering enlightenment that leads to action.
What an honor to be here at the Little White House participating in an event spurred by the leadership of one of the greatest Presidents in American history and as far as I am concerned, he was the best man and best president to fill the role.

Fire protection in America is better because of him and the American Fire Service is better because of The President’s Conference on Fire Prevention. The only thing I would change is exchanging the word “prevention” to “protection”. The word “prevention” has lost its sexiness, and we now know it’s all about sexy.

While fire protection was made better because of President Truman, protection of the Truman Little White House is better because of you, the leadership of the Truman Little White House and your commitment to its preservation.

Here is a picture of President Truman and of a sign that he kept on his desk with the iconic words inscribed, “The buck stops here.”

The key here is President Harry Truman felt personally responsible to fix America’s fire problem. The buck stopped with him.

The 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention was discussed at the January 1947 NFSA Board Meeting. Percy Bugbee, the NFPA President in 1947, and H.E. Hilton from the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, addressed the Board of Directors, most likely because of the recent hotel fires, but they discussed the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention. The NFSA
committed members to attend. It does not appear that NFSA staff, which was probably only three at the time, attended.

There were 1,924 chambers of commerce across the country and over 1,200 had fire prevention committees. I am not sure if we would find any chambers of commerce in the country today with hardly any focus on fire, except perhaps to oppose fire codes being updated and becoming more stringent.

I am not here to talk about fires all over the world, but I will tell you these opportunities to educate and advocate for change, just like President Truman did in 1947.

The Brazilian History Museum lost thousands of years’ worth of history to fire. Then Notre Dame captured the attention of the world. The Lewis and Clark museum had the largest private collection in the United States in St. Louis, MO, and you didn’t even hear about it.

This is Christ Church in Philadelphia; our long-time member Oliver Fire Protection and Security conducted their annual test of this system for

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NFSA’s impact on history

REPORT OF THE 33rd ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL AUTOMATIC SPRINKLER AND FIRE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Held at the Biltmore Hotel, New York City,
Thursday, January 23, 1947 at 10:30 a.m.

Call to Order:
Russell Grinnell, President, presided. A. D. Bosch acted as secretary.

Roll Call:
Members in Attendance:
Represented by:

"Automatic" Sprinkler Corp. of America
J. A. Coakley and J. J. Power, Jr.
Globe Automatic Sprinkler Company
A. M. Lewis and J. S. Mallory.
Grinnell Corporation
Russell Grinnell and Roger T. Clapp.
Rockwood Sprinkler Company
W. J. Carroll and R. B. Heath.
The Viking Corporation
J. H. Cashman
H. G. Vogel Company
A. G. Waalfel.


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The Brazilian History Museum lost thousands of years’ worth of history to fire. Then Notre Dame captured the attention of the world. The Lewis and Clark museum had the largest private collection in the United States in St. Louis, MO, and you didn’t even hear about it.

This is Christ Church in Philadelphia; our long-time member Oliver Fire Protection and Security conducted their annual test of this system for
the news media to ensure the public that this property was protected. It’s not preserved until it’s protected. You build it, we will protect it.

It is an honor to be able to report on the Committee on Building Construction, Operations and Protection.

This committee stated that the problem was that major cities still lack proper and current codes and many smaller communities could be totally destroyed. The committee reported that this only awaits the proper circumstance of time, place, force of wind, occupancy conditions, and ignition. It went on to say, “The alertness of our public firefighting services is an important factor in interrupting dangerous combinations of circumstances.”

I would submit that the same is true today. While you may not burn down the entire town, you can have fires today significant enough to destroy enough of the community, especially historic districts, that the economy may never recover. While communities today are certainly resilient, the impact of devastating fire last for years and impacts thousands of people.

The construction of buildings yesterday, today, and tomorrow will always be a significant factor when it comes to uncontrolled fire. While codes and standards have certainly improved immensely over the years, we still have work to do. The majority of this work is in how fast building products come to market, how they are tested, regulated, and inspected.

The operation of these buildings has been greatly improved from the operations of 100 years ago. We have transitioned from big box stores, high-rise buildings, massive data centers, extremely large warehouses, and distribution centers to robots and buildings operating without humans. This is all complex and certainly can have a negative impact on the economy and endanger firefighters’ lives, but the complexity of our homes and the synthetic material and volume of non-regulated materials are still causing the majority of our fire deaths.

Here is a picture of Georgetown, South Carolina, and Loveland/Symmes, Ohio. This is one of the latest fires with a significant
impact to the local economy and historical buildings. Because of the leadership of the fire chief and his interaction with the Insurance Services Offices, which rates communities on their building and fire protection capabilities for insurance companies, this community and the country will be better off for their efforts to evaluate the buildings, their operations, and the protection of them.

The Committee on Building Construction, Operations, and Protection established that the responsibility for these, which is still true today, is the owner of the property or the manager of the business. Then government is to properly regulate and inspect, and it is the responsibility of the public to demand it. I am not sure this cycle of responsibility is as strong as it should be.

The 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention was described at the January 1947 NFSA Board Meeting as “The State of a New Era”. Because of the fire hazards and the concerns in 1947, it was described that Americans were “living in a fool’s paradise”.

April 1947

1. THE START OF A NEW SAFETY-PRIOR-ENGINEERED FIRE PROTECTION. It has been said that The President's Conference on Safety-Prior-Engineered Fire Protection is the first of a new era to revolutionize the national effort to reduce death and fire loss from fire. At long last, Americans are facing the unpleasant reality of living in a fool’s paradise of fire hazards and that a coordinated program to stop the irreparable waste of life and property from the wanton toll of fire is one of the most urgent needs of the moment. Already the losses for the first six months of this year are 100% greater than for the same period in 1946 and the death toll is mounting because of the increase in the number of smaller fires occurring through this nation.

2. DEMAND AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS WHERE firefighters say life-saving perishable contents are potentially exposed. Why wait for another death-dealing fire when life-saving measures can be obtained? The President's Conference on Safety-Prior-Engineered Fire Protection featured an excellent article titled "Fireproofing Your Home" by Helene H. Smith in its April issue and supplemented this with a full-page advertisement in the New York Times of March 20 as part of its program to bring to light important matters of public concern. The heading of this item was one of the article's recommendations to prevent more fatal tragedies. Other references therein to automatic sprinkler protection followed.
In the Women’s Home Companion magazine, there was an article titled People Aren’t Fireproof. This prompted our association to say “Demand Automatic Fire Sprinklers Where Built-in Safety Cannot be Obtained” to compartmentalization and to keep good housekeeping.

It is an honor to have been assigned the Committee on Building Construction, Operations, and Protection. After reading the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report and researching the minutes from the January 1947 NFSA Board Meeting, it was apparent this was the most important committee to our association. It was the committee reported on following the conference at our May 1947 NFSA Board Meeting.

The focus was on the architecture and the design of new buildings, as well as the selection of interior finishes. As you can see, we even underlined the part that recommended the more general use of automatic fire sprinkler systems in all large industrial and mercantile buildings, as well as schools, institutions, hotels, and places of public assembly.

I just came from a meeting last week in Annapolis, MD. They are considering retrofitting the historic district with fire sprinklers. Many communities have done so across the country since the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report recommended state and local fire safety committees give loans for the repairs of buildings essential to life safety. This applies to the preservation of historical districts such as Grapevine, TX; Lewisville, TX; and, most recently, Annapolis, MD.
At our November 1947 NFSA Board Meeting, it was reported that Governor Bradford of Massachusetts convened a Fire Prevention Conference, like so many other states did. This was the catalyst that created state fire marshal office and accelerated the adoption of codes and standards. The President’s Conference on Fire Prevention.

The precious Key West Little White House – I wish more Presidents of modern times used our precious landmarks, and I can only pray that future presidents will realize the value and utilize more of histories treasures.

To the Key West Little White House leaders, staff and volunteers, thank you for your perseverance and for making sure this gem is preserved for all to enjoy beyond our lifespan. When I first came to this house many years ago, I was not focused on the preservation of history and did not even know about President Truman’s time here. But I would learn, and I loved what I learned.

Thank you to Julius Halas, the Florida State Fire Marshal, and his staff for conducting inspections and ensuring that deficiencies to the fire protection systems were tagged as “in need of repair.”

Thank you to Vickie Pritchett for her interest in the operation and protection of this treasure. But most of all thank you to Clark Gey and his team at Wayne Automatic Fire Sprinklers for sending a team of people here to inspect, test, and maintain this system.
There are 112 fire sprinkler devices on this property, and all have been replaced. These fire sprinklers were donated by Reliable Automatic Fire Sprinkler out of New York and South Carolina. Their original owner, Kevin Fee, was at the Little White House when our Board of Directors ate on the lawn and toured the house in 2016. He and Clark Gey committed to the project, and they delivered.

From 1947 to today, automatic fire sprinklers have remained the most effective means of confining a fire to its area of origin. The Committee knew that then, and it is still true today.

President Truman saved more lives convening the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention than we all could in our collective careers. To reduce fire deaths from over 10,000 to less than 4,000 is a great accomplishment.

However, I pray he inspires us all today and those that follow us to reduce this number to below 1,000. President Truman would be encouraging, saying not only that we could but that we should accomplish this.
Then & Now

96% Effectiveness for 121 years
Closing Remarks:

Captain Alex Vega, Executive Director of the Key West Firehouse Museum, provided attendees with an overview of key fires in Key West and the history of the Key West Fire Department.

Closing remarks were also provided by Chief Compton, Jeanna Garrido and Clinton Curry. Clifton Truman Daniel, grandson of the 33rd President of the United States, brought the event to a close by recounting the rebuilding of the White House during Truman’s presidency and fire protection practices at their family home in Missouri. He ended his comments by performing the same speech President Truman made 72 years prior at the conference (Appendix A).
The 2nd Firefighter Life Safety Summit (FLSS) – Fire Act 13 (FA13) Strategic Leadership Meeting had four goals:

1. Choose five of the 24 Strategies for Moving Forward (Appendix C)
2. Implement the six committees recommended by President Truman in the 1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention report
3. Initiate and Plan the 2020 Firefighter Life Safety Summit
4. Plan the 2020 Research Agenda Symposium

Attendees determined what they saw as the needs, demands, and expectations for the fire service and the public in terms of fire prevention and fire safety. It is important that we consider this exercise with a short, medium, and long-term mindset. The development and selection of the 24 Strategies for Moving Forward is discussed below.

Plans were also developed to prioritize five of these strategies over the next five years; implement six committees over a six-year period; and for the 2020 Firefighter Life Safety Summit and the 2020 Research Agenda Symposium.
Recommendations: Continuing President Truman’s Legacy

Prioritize Five Strategies for Moving Forward

During the Truman Fire Forum, Chief Dennis Compton facilitated a two-hour discussion with attendees to gather their recommendations on strategies to improve fire prevention, firefighter safety, and life safety. Thirty recommendations were captured during this discussion, which then were condensed into 24 Strategies to Moving Forward (Appendix C). Attendees then ranked their highest priorities. The top five recommendations listed below are a result of this process and are considered the most important strategies for meeting the needs, demands and expectations of the fire service.

As a result of the forum, two events have developed as a continuation of President Truman’s legacy, the 2019 Firefighter Life Safety Summit and the 2020 Research Agenda Symposium. See the Recommendations: Continuing President Truman’s Legacy section for more information.

The results of the Truman Legacy Fire Forum identified 30 action items for consideration. These actions items were abbreviated into 24 action items and consolidated into a list named the “24 Strategies for Moving Forward” (Appendix C). Attendees voted on the top five strategies to prioritize for the upcoming year to address the fire problem in the United States.

The five strategies prioritized for the year 2020 are as follows:

1. **Integrate fire prevention and public education into the regular operations of the fire department.** Key tenets of this strategy include encouraging fire departments to change their culture to value fire prevention on equally with operations, starting fire prevention education at the recruit level, viewing fire as a failure in the system, and understanding that that the fire chief is ultimately responsible for Community Risk Reduction (CRR).
2. **Use data, research, and science as a basis for improving fire prevention.** Integrating data and research will give us the power to tell the story of why change is needed. Firefighters and fire officers are on the front lines of this and it is critical that they know the value and importance of data – both locally and nationally. This strategy includes the proper funding of basic fire service research, including physiological, fire behavior, and others.
3. **Marry modern solutions with modern challenges and problems.** Since the events of 1947, our nation has only grown more complex – both in our use and access to technology and in our people. Technology and interactive applications that didn’t exist in 1947 now give us the power to reach the public in ways once unimaginable. With this, the diversity of our nation’s generations and ethnic cultures has changed fire prevention and we must account for these complexities in developing our messages.
4. **Find new ways to leverage fire prevention safety efforts.** Identify and act on creative strategies to increasing fire prevention methods, such as encouraging government
agencies such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), who provide 48% of all new mortgages, to limit mortgage funding to homes without sprinklers.

5. **Tell the fire prevention story.** Use professional marketing expertise to get our message out so that as many people as possible are aware of and understand the importance of fire prevention.

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**Implement One of President Truman’s Six Committees per Year**

It was also agreed the following six committees recommended by President Truman in the *1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention* report through the appointment of statewide committees:

- Committee on Law Enforcement
- Committee on Fire Prevention
- Committee on Firefighting Services
- Committee on Research; the Committee on Building, Construction, Operations, and Protection
- Committee on Public Support

A six-year plan was developed to establish one committee a year to ensure that each committee is given adequate attention. The annual theme for the next six Annual Harry Truman Legacy Symposiums (2020-2026) will reflect the chosen committee of the year. A Continuing Committee was also established to implement this action plan (Objective #3).

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**Convene the 2020 Firefighter Life Safety Summit**

It was recommended for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to convene another Firefighter Life Safety Summit using the *1947 President’s Conference on Fire Prevention* report as a guiding document. An announcement about the date and location are forthcoming. For more information about the 2004 and 2014 Firefighter Life Safety Summits and other related summits, visit [www.everyonegoeshome.com/resources/everyone-goes-home-firefighter-life-safety-summit-reports/](http://www.everyonegoeshome.com/resources/everyone-goes-home-firefighter-life-safety-summit-reports/).
Convene the 2020 Research Agenda Symposium

Firefighter Life Safety Initiative #7 calls for the creation of a national research agenda and data collection system related to the 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives. It was also recommended for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to host the Fourth National Fire Service Research Agenda in 2020. To review the reports from the previous meetings, which took place every five years since 2005, visit www.everyonegoeshome.com/resources/research-symposium-reports/.
# Appendix

## Appendix A: Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Final Report of the Continuing Committee of the President’s Conference on Fire Prevention. 1948.</td>
<td><a href="https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/28">https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/28</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Wingspread III Conference on Fire Service Administration, Education and Research. IAFC. 1986.</td>
<td><a href="https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/10">https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/10</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Wingspread IV conference. IAFC. 1996.</td>
<td><a href="https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/9">https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/9</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Wingspread V. IAFC. 2006.</td>
<td><a href="https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/7">https://fire.omeka.net/items/show/7</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Congressional Record Entry**

Description: The 2019 President Truman Legacy Symposium and Fire Forum was entered into the Congressional Record on May 23, 2019, titled Recognizing President Harry S. Truman’s Legacy in Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Historic Preservation; Congressional Record Vol. 165, No. 87.

(Link: [www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2019/5/23/extensions-of-remarks-section/article/e662-3?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Harry%20S.%20Truman%22%5D%7D&s=1&r=1])

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**Recognizing President Harry S. Truman’s Legacy in Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Historic Preservation**

**Mr. PASCHELL.** Madam Speaker, between May 5 and 7 of this year, national leaders representing every facet of the fire service gathered together in Key West, Florida for three days of discussions on the future of fire prevention, public education, and fire service challenges in general. They attended the event at the invitation of the Harry S. Truman Foundation. Each year, the Truman Foundation conducts an annual symposium at the Truman Little White House to reflect on the legacy of our nation’s 33rd President. The theme of the 2019 symposium was, “Truman’s Legacy Towards Fire Prevention, Fire Safety, and Historic Preservation.”

In 1947, President Truman convened a conference on fire prevention following a series of devastating fires that captured the attention of the nation. Hundreds of representatives from government, business, non-government organizations, and the fire service attended the Washington conference. In his remarks to the attendees, Truman stated: “Safety from fire should not be a topic for discussion during only one or two weeks of the year. It is definitely a year-round public responsibility.” Seventy-two years later, President Truman’s words inspired the assembly of prominent fire service leaders to meet in Key West.

The Truman Foundation asked the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to serve as a co-facilitator of the recent program. By every account, both organizations did an exemplary job in conducting the event. Presentations by notable fire service leaders addressed a broad range of issues that span the important work in fire prevention. For example, on the third day, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation conducted a forum to identify key areas for advancing fire prevention in our nation. Watching the recent success in Florida, I remain so impressed by the ability of the national fire organizations to work together to address the needs of firefighters and public safety. This ability is something I have witnessed throughout my years as a co-Chair of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

Seventy-two years have passed since the 1947 conference, and during that time, the number of victims dying in fires has decreased to approximately 1,000 each year. This isn’t a coincidence. But the fire service leaders assembled in Key West this month didn’t see this as an achievement; instead, they recognized that more work needs to be done.

The strength of our nation has always been the indomitable spirit of our citizens. The fire service personifies that spirit. I commend the Harry S. Truman Foundation and the National Fallen Firefighters Foundations for bringing together our nation’s leading fire officials.

And I pledge my continued support for the more than one million firefighters across the nation who are prepared to respond to the next call for help and to the family members who lose loved ones in the line of duty. God bless all of them.
### Appendix B: 16 Firefighter Life Safety Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Define and advocate the need for a cultural change within the fire service relating to safety; incorporating leadership, management, supervision, accountability and personal responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enhance the personal and organizational accountability for health and safety throughout the fire service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Focus greater attention on the integration of risk management with incident management at all levels, including strategic, tactical and planning responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>All firefighters must be empowered to stop unsafe practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Develop and implement national standards for training, qualifications, and certification (including regular recertification) that are equally applicable to all firefighters based on the duties they are expected to perform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Develop and implement national medical and physical fitness standards that are equally applicable to all firefighters, based on the duties they are expected to perform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Create a national research agenda and data collection system that relates to the initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Utilize available technology wherever it can produce higher levels of health and safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Thoroughly investigate all firefighter fatalities, injuries and near misses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Grant programs should support the implementation of safe practices and/or mandate safe practices as an eligibility requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>National protocols for response to violent incidents should be developed and championed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Firefighters and their families must have access to counseling and psychological support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Public education must receive more resources and be championed as a critical fire and life safety program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Advocacy must be strengthened for the enforcement of codes and the installation of home fire sprinklers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Safety must be a primary consideration in the design of apparatus and equipment.</td>
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</table>

### Appendix C: 24 Strategies to Moving Forward

Five of the twenty-four action items were voted to be prioritized and implemented, one per year, over the next five years. These five action items have been highlighted below:

<p>|   | Integrate fire prevention and public education into the regular operations of the fire department. Key tenets of this strategy include encouraging fire departments to change their culture to value fire prevention on equally with operations, starting fire prevention education at the recruit level, viewing fire as a failure in the system, and understanding that that the fire chief is ultimately responsible for Community Risk Reduction (CRR). |
|   | Educate public officials, local and senior, on the value of fire protection and their obligation to provide it. |
|   | Transfer technology to key legislators to move technology transfer forward. |
|   | Use data, research, and science as a basis for improving fire prevention. Integrating data and research will give us the power to tell the story of why change is needed. Firefighters and fire officers are on the front lines of this and it is critical that they know the value and importance of data – both locally and nationally. This strategy includes the proper funding of basic fire service research, including physiological, fire behavior, and others. |
|   | Marry modern solutions with modern challenges and problems. Since the events of 1947, our nation has only grown more complex – both in our use and access to technology and in our people. Technology and interactive applications that didn’t exist in 1947 now give us the power to reach the public in ways once unimaginable. With this, the diversity of our nation’s generations and ethnic cultures has changed fire prevention and we must account for these complexities in developing our messages. |
|   | Using blended learning with technology and vocational hands on. |
|   | Proper level of funding for USFA to provide a leadership role in the fire prevention-support from fire organizations. |
|   | Presidential or congressional commission to assess the fire problem in the US and make recommendations (funding, authorization, authority). |
|   | Find new ways to leverage fire prevention safety efforts. Identify and act on creative strategies to increasing fire prevention methods, such as encouraging government agencies such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), who provide 48% of all new mortgages, to limit mortgage funding to homes without sprinklers. |
|   | Move USFA to DOT. DOT recognized a problem with airbag deployments and killing kids. They eliminated it. DOT has put a reminder to look in your back seat for a child. That took 50 kids dying. They are a federal agency that makes changes. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Educate the public on the importance of codes and standards and adopt them without change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Improve our political acumen across the board. If we don't get better there, we are never going to make change. Understand success stories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Improve relationships - will not listen unless there is a relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Emergency management community- involve this component in the message and process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Define the role of the fire service community in the wildland fire - emphasis had been on structural fires. Wider recognition of the wildland fire problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Use the NFPA ecosystem as the framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Bring outsiders into our internal discussion and bring our inside discussions to educate the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td><strong>Tell the fire prevention story.</strong> Use professional marketing expertise to get our message out so that as many people as possible are aware of and understand the importance of fire prevention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Involvement of the fire service in the fire and building code process and follow up adoption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Look at safety differently influence over control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Translate research into our public message (ex. Close the door vs crawl low in smoke). Identify who will take the lead in the fire prevention message, who will join in? We need a national spokesperson. Dick Van Dyke used to tell me stop drop and roll when I was a kid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Make sure the volunteer fire service is heard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Economic vs. emotional impact of fire - quantify how fire, fire prevention, fire suppression. Phoenix ASU project of measuring fire loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Take advantage of AFG’s ability to direct funding to a specific project or projects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Directory as of May 2, 2019
National Fallen Firefighters Mission

Our mission is to honor and remember America’s fallen fire heroes, to provide resources to assist their survivors in rebuilding their lives, and work within the fire service community to reduce firefighter deaths and injuries.

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