



## NEW JERSEY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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CHAIRMAN,  
FIRE SAFETY COMMISSION

August 24, 2011

 Chief

### RE: Reorganization of the Division of Fire Safety

Dear Chief,

I am writing to you about a matter of great importance to the fire service community in New Jersey. I have been made aware of plans to dismember the Division of Fire Safety ("Division") and disperse its constituent parts to a variety of agencies, including the State Police.

While a formal plan has not yet been made public, the proposed changes are significant. For example, the Bureau of Fire Code Enforcement may be moved to the Division of Codes and Standards. The Arson K-9 – Fire Investigation Unit could be moved to the New Jersey State Police. The Office of Fire Department Preparedness might be moved to the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness. It is not yet clear what would happen to the other offices and bureaus in the Division but it's reasonable to expect that additional changes are under consideration.

In addition to being opposed to this plan I am also surprised. Governor Christie's transition report found that the Division is "well funded and self-sustaining." The report goes on to say that "the Division has generated surplus revenue that has been applied to support other entities in state government." It appears likely that the intent of this reorganization is not efficiency, but a thinly veiled attempt to seize the revenue that the Division generates each year.

The original intent of the legislation creating the Division was to create an umbrella organization that would be responsible for fire safety and prevention. Any plan that contradicts this intent and the current composition of the Division will threaten activities focused on education, prevention and investigation.

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On Thursday, September 15<sup>th</sup> the Fire Safety Commission will meet at the Wildwood Convention Center (4501 Boardwalk, Wildwood, N.J.) at 10:00 AM. Please join me and my fellow Commissioners at this meeting to express your opinions about this proposal. You may contact my office at 732-432-8460 to RSVP and to attain more information. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,  


John S. Wisniewski  
Chairman, Fire Safety Commission

Cc: Fire Safety Commission Members