

*Congressional Fire Services Institute / International Association of Fire Chiefs / International Code Council / National Association of State Fire Marshals / National Association of State Foresters / National Fire Protection Association / National Volunteer Fire Council*

October 21, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader McConnell:

The undersigned organizations representing national fire and emergency services, and state forestry agencies write today to express our support for the State Fire Capacity Program (SFC, formerly State Fire Assistance) and the Volunteer Fire Capacity Program (VFC, formerly Volunteer Fire Assistance). We request that the House Appropriations Committee-approved FY23 funding levels of \$78M for SVC and \$21M for VFC be retained in any year-end appropriations bill.

As wildfires continue to rage around the country on an annual and ongoing basis, these programs are more important than ever. SFC helps train state and local first responders who are often the first to arrive at a wildfire incident, as well as equip them with the tools they need to put wildland fires out efficiently and safely. SFC also supports management activities that mitigate fire risk on non-federal lands.

VFC, meanwhile, helps bridge resource gaps for thousands of fire departments across the country by providing support to volunteer fire departments protecting communities with populations of 10,000 or fewer residents.

We need to continue to fund the work of fighting fires on the ground. The VFC and the SFC are essential wildfire risk reduction and protection programs within the USDA Forest Service's (Forest Service) State and Private Forestry (S&PF) program area. The important work accomplished through SFC and the VFC programs helps decrease total federal emergency wildland fire suppression costs and reduce the threat of fire to communities on public and private lands.

While we appreciate the support shown for both of the programs in the House and Senate Interior Appropriations bills, **we request that the House Appropriations Committee approved**

**funding levels of \$78M for SFC and \$21M for VFC be retained in any year-end appropriations bill.**

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Congressional Fire Services Institute  
International Association of Fire Chiefs  
International Code Council  
National Association of State Fire Marshals  
National Association of State Foresters  
National Fire Protection Association  
National Volunteer Fire Council