



S. 2606 – United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008

FLOOR SITUATION

S. 2606 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) on February 7, 2008. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on September 18, 2008.

S. 2606 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 22, 2008.

SUMMARY

S. 2606 authorizes appropriations for the United States Fire Administration at the following levels:

- \$70 million in fiscal year 2009;
- \$72.1 million in fiscal year 2010;
- \$74.3 million in fiscal year 2011; and
- \$76.5 million in fiscal year 2012.

The bill allows the Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration to contract for on-site training programs for fire service personnel. S. 2606 also requires the Administrator to provide triennial reports to Congress on the National Fire Academy curriculum and training for fires at ports.

S. 2606 allows \$5 million from amounts authorized under this act to update the National Fire Incident Reporting System to an Internet-based, real-time incident reporting database. In addition, the bill instructs the Administrator to include fire-service based emergency medical services in liaison and coordination activities across all Federal agencies. Finally, the bill allows the Administrator to enter into contracts or provide grants for fire technology research.

BACKGROUND

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) was last authorized by the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003 (P.L. 108-126). The USFA is currently authorized at \$68.8 million for fiscal year 2008.

Congress established the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration in 1974 as a part of the Department of Commerce. The Administration was renamed the United States Fire Administration in 1978, and in 1979, the USFA became a part of the newly created FEMA under President Jimmy Carter's Reorganization Plan No. 3.

The mission of the USFA is "to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and related emergencies, through leadership, advocacy, coordination and support." Although the United States has made great strides in curbing fire losses, our nation continues to have one of the highest fire death rates in the industrialized world.

According to the USFA website, fire killed more Americans than all natural disasters combined during 2006. There were more than 3,245 civilian fire deaths and 16,400 civilian fire injuries, and 106 firefighters lost their lives during that same year. The USFA reports that direct property loss due to fires was estimated at \$11.3 billion for 2006.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing S. 2606 "would cost



LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

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\$291 million over the 2009-2013 period." [Full CBO Cost Estimate](#)

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