



ILLINOIS FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

Dedicated to excellence in the Fire Service

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May 3, 2011

The Honorable Aaron Schock
328 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Schock:

I am writing as the President of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association to request that you consider being the lead sponsor of The Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act.

Every year fire causes over 3,200 civilian deaths, an average of 100 firefighter line-of-duty deaths, thousands of injuries, and an economic impact of over \$107 billion. As a fire chief, I know first-hand that the most effective way to minimize this loss of life and property is through automatic sprinklers, because they contain fires at the point of origin almost 90% of the time. In a 2007 study, the National Fire Protection Association concluded that the death rate in buildings protected by sprinkler systems can be reduced by at least 57% and property damage decreased by up to 68%. It is also important to note that no firefighter has ever died fighting a fire in a fully sprinkled structure.

Although most new buildings are required to have sprinkler systems there is a significant inventory of older buildings that were built before fire codes required this life-saving technology. This bill would seek to change that by incentivizing retrofits to these older buildings. Your leadership on this very important issue and your membership on the Ways and Means Committee are critical to the successful passage of this life-saving legislation. The proposed legislation has the support of the entire fire-service community who consider it to be crucial to their mission to protect lives and property from fire. With your leadership and support this bill can be passed and will save the lives of many Americans.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chief Ralph Webster