

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 149

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 138

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 149—Relative to firefighters.

[Filed with Secretary of State September 5, 2008.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 149, Keene. Firefighters.

This measure would recognize and commend the bravery and selflessness of the firefighters of CAL-FIRE.

WHEREAS, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) firefighters, the men and women of CAL-FIRE, perform an essential public service, and CAL-FIRE is the second largest firefighting agency in the country, operating 804 fire stations and over 1,000 fire engines throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the significant duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices of the approximately 6,900 CDF firefighters; and

WHEREAS, CAL-FIRE was founded 103 years ago and has a long and proud history of public service, and the men and women of CAL-FIRE continue to devote themselves to their jobs, regardless of the potential hazards and dangers to themselves; and

WHEREAS, California is the most fire prone state in the United States and CAL-FIRE is the preeminent agency in wildland and urban interface firefighting in the country, responding to an annual average of over 5,600 wildland fires across the state; and

WHEREAS, CDF firefighters have consistently demonstrated their bravery and skill in responding to such devastating fires as the Oakland Hills Fire of 1991, the Southern California Fire Sieges of 2003 and 2007, and, this year, the Humboldt Fire that burned over 23,000 acres in Butte County and the 41 Fire that burned over 3,000 acres in Madera County; and

WHEREAS, CAL-FIRE efficiently and tirelessly managed an unprecedented siege of dry lightning strikes this year in northern California, which added hundreds of fires to a statewide peak of over 1,700 fires that burned over 700,000 acres by July; and

WHEREAS, In addition to responding to wildfires across California, CDF firefighters play a critical role in responding to a multitude of statewide and national emergencies, including, but not limited to, the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989, the Cantara Spill of 1991, the Northridge Earthquake of 1994, the Central California Floods of 1997 and 1998, the Oklahoma City Bombing of 1995, New York City after September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005: and

WHEREAS, CDF firefighters answer an average of over 350,000 calls a year and only 1.6 percent, approximately, of those calls relate to wildland fires; and

WHEREAS, The firefighters of CAL-FIRE perform the same work as other municipal fire departments, such as responding to structural fires and automobile accidents, attending to victims of heart attacks and drownings, and rescuing flood and earthquake victims; and

WHEREAS, CDF firefighters continue to work nearly one-third more hours than their municipal counterparts on average as part of their regular duty, often fighting fires for weeks on end without relief during every fire season; and

WHEREAS, Because of drought, bark beetle infestations, and sudden oak death disease, we are facing historically high levels of fuels, and the 2008 fire season looks to be as dangerous as any in recent years; and

WHEREAS, The California Firefighters' Memorial in Capitol Park bears the names of approximately 1,200 firefighters who have died in the line of duty and approximately 75 of those are CDF firefighters who have lost their lives protecting our residents, their homes, parks, and communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature of the State of California hereby recognizes and commends the bravery and selflessness of the firefighters of CAL-FIRE, and expresses its appreciation for their continued service and dedication to the residents of this state; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author, the Director of CAL-FIRE, and the President of the CDF Firefighters.