

# America's Volunteer Fire Departments In Crisis

*Bill Fawell, Rep Candidate in 17th Congressional District IL. announced his "Volunteer Fire Department Act" to save America's Volunteer Fire Departments.*

GALENA, ILLINOIS, USA, August 22, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "In traveling the 17th Congressional District I have discovered a long simmering crisis in our volunteer fire departments not only across my district, but spanning the nation and I'm stunned," Fawell admitted.

"This volunteer crisis began 10 years ago with the Crash of 2008 and has not only worsened, but now we're staring into the abyss," Fawell warned. "There are few new volunteers because our Middle Class has been destroyed, eviscerated by our government's monetary policies. And now these cancerous policies threaten this civic pillar of our smaller communities."



Rep. US Congress 17th ILL

Covering 95% of America's land mass volunteers man 85% of all volunteer fire departments. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates there were approximately 1,160,450 local firefighters in the U.S. in 2015. Of the total number of firefighters 345,600 (30%) were career firefighters and 814,850 (70%) were volunteer firefighters.\*

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*Bill Fawell, Rep Candidate US Congress 17th ILL.*

"I've been working directly with the President of the Illinois Fire Fighters Association, Chief John Swane from Fulton Illinois," said Fawell. "I've spoken at length with many fire chiefs across the district confirming we're deep into a crisis. Every chief I've spoken to has given their whole

hearted support to this legislation, some with tears in their eyes but all with rising hearts because someone has finally listened and someone cares."

"People don't understand what these guys accomplish with so little that means so much to everyone else. These are all volunteers and they're getting to where they can't do it anymore. Can you imagine what can happen to insurance rates in 95% of America while our volunteer fire departments dissipate," Fawell asked? "We have waited too long and as it is national in nature, it qualifies for national support."

The NFPA estimates there are 29,727 fire departments in the U.S. Of these, 2,651 departments

were all career, 1,893 were mostly career, 5,421 were mostly volunteer and 19,762 were all volunteer. This comes to over 25,000 volunteer fire departments with an average ratio of 32 firemen to each individual department.

"The Volunteer Fire Department Act will cost an estimated \$20 billion a year versus the looming \$100 billion cost of making our volunteer fire department service fully professional," Fawell explained. "The plan is to provide group family health insurance to 30 members of each Volunteer Fire Dept and a \$5000 per year pension to be paid at 65 years. Retired firemen will receive \$5000 a year for each year of service, with insurance extensions when the volunteer is retired with disabilities."

"This will ease the challenges to the 13,500 departments that provide EMS services and increase the savings, as EMTs are usually trained firemen. Personally I'm shocked to find this crisis so far advanced but unaddressed and ignored by the Congress and the states. I can't believe I'm the only candidate for Congress that knows about this and is working to solve this calamity before it really hits home" Fawell said. "It should be part of the Farm Bill now; but if not and if I'm elected you can bet I'll get this Volunteer Fire Department Act passed."

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Photo attached

Contact Info For Interviews:

Bill Fawell

815-353-9888

bill@electfawell.com ; Facebook.com/electfawell ; Twitter @realbillfawell ;

[www.electfawell.com/blog](http://www.electfawell.com/blog)

Bill Fawell

Elect Fawell

815.353.9888

email us here

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