

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1499

To direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a survey to determine the level of compliance with national voluntary consensus standards and any barriers to achieving compliance with such standards, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 12, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science and Technology

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a survey to determine the level of compliance with national voluntary consensus standards and any barriers to achieving compliance with such standards, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Firefighter Fatality
5 Reduction Act of 2009”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

22 (6) Through its Firefighter Fatality Investiga-
23 tion and Prevention Program, the National Institute
24 for Occupational Safety and Health has identified
25 the failure to follow specific national voluntary con-

1 sensus standards as a contributing factor in many
2 firefighter deaths.

8 SEC. 3. SURVEY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SE-
9 CURITY.

10 (a) SURVEY REQUIRED.—Not later than 120 days
11 after enactment of this bill, the Secretary of Homeland
12 Security, in consultation with the Task Force established
13 under section 4, shall begin to conduct a survey of each
14 career, volunteer, and combination fire department located
15 in the United States in order to ascertain whether each
16 such fire department is in compliance with national vol-
17 untary consensus standards. In carrying out the survey,
18 the Secretary shall ascertain the rates of such compliance
19 of—

20 (1) paid, volunteer, and combination fire de-
21 partments;

22 (2) fire departments located in communities of
23 varying sizes; and

1 (b) CONTENTS OF SURVEY.—The survey required
2 under subsection (a) shall ascertain, for each fire depart-
3 ment in the United States, compliance with national vol-
4 untary consensus standards for staffing, training, safe op-
5 erations, personal protective equipment, and fitness.

6 (c) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date
7 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to
8 Congress a report on the findings of the survey required
9 under subsection (a), including the rates of compliance
10 under the categories specified under paragraphs (1), (2),
11 and (3) of that subsection.

12 SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE TO ENHANCE
13 FIREFIGHTER SAFETY.

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 60 days after
15 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall
16 establish a task force to be known as the “Task Force
17 to Enhance Firefighter Safety” (hereinafter in this section
18 referred to as the “Task Force”).

19 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Members of the Task Force
21 shall be appointed by the Secretary from among the
22 general public and shall include—

23 (A) representatives of national organiza-
24 tions representing firefighters and fire chiefs;

1 (B) individuals representing standards-set-
2 ting and accrediting organizations, including
3 representatives from the voluntary consensus
4 codes and standards development community;
5 and

(C) other individuals as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

20 (c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Task Force shall—

23 (2) develop a plan to enhance firefighter safety
24 by increasing fire department compliance with na-
25 tional voluntary consensus standards for staffing,

1 training, safe operations, personal protective equipment,
2 and fitness, including by—

3 (A) reviewing and evaluating the report required under section 3 to determine the extent
4 of and barriers to achieving compliance with national voluntary consensus standards among
5 fire departments; and

6 (B) considering ways in which the Federal
7 Government, States, and localities can promote,
8 encourage, or require fire departments to comply with national voluntary consensus standards.

9 (d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 6
10 months after the date on which the Secretary submits the
11 report required under section 3(c), the Task Force shall
12 submit to Congress and the Secretary a report containing
13 the findings and recommendations of the Task Force together with the plan described in subsection (c)(2).

14 **SEC. 5. NATIONAL VOLUNTARY CONSENSUS STANDARDS**

15 **DEFINED.**

16 For the purposes of this Act, the term “national voluntary consensus standards” means the latest edition of
17 the national voluntary consensus standards for fire fighter
18 and fire department staffing, training, safe operations,

- 1 personal protective equipment, and fitness available on the
- 2 date of the enactment of this Act.

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