

The Ohio Fire Officials Association (OFOA)

July 2019

Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association, Inc.
450 West Wilson Bridge Road.
Suite 150
Worthington, Ohio 43085

Board of Directors:

This is my written report for the OFOA - Fire Code Committee to be distributed as needed for your upcoming Annual Conference and Meeting.

The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association and OFOA worked together this past year on several key issues that affect the residents of the State of Ohio. Some of these issues are a work in progress and we will continue to push forward to get a resolution that is positive for all.

Fireworks HB 253 and SB 72:

The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association (OFCA) continue to monitor and watch the fireworks legislation this session. Our goal with this bill is to offer recommendations on what is best for Ohioans. The bill still contains a Fireworks Study Group. The purpose of the fireworks study group is to review and make recommendations regarding the Fireworks Law, to extend the moratorium on issuing fireworks manufacturer and wholesaler licenses, to eliminate, beginning January 1, 2021, the moratorium on geographic transfer of fireworks manufacturer and wholesaler licenses, and, beginning July 1, 2020, to impose a fee on the retail sale of consumer grade fireworks in this state and to expand the ability of individuals to obtain and use 1.4G consumer fireworks. Our hope is to provide guidelines for safety and to modify where necessary language in the bill.

Reduction of the OAC SB 1

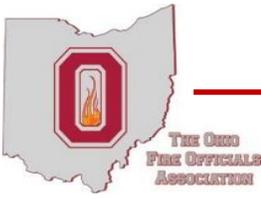
In March we testified in front of the Senate Committee on this issue, we voiced our concerns about Senate Bill 1 and included the following points:

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Specifically, we oppose the broad language reducing the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) by thirty percent over the next three years. The Ohio Fire Code is part of the OAC as well as the Ohio Building Code(OBC) and the Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Regulations (BUSTR).

- Approximately 85% of the State of Ohio Fire Code is adopted straight from the International Fire Code, a reduction by 30 % would force reductions in nationally approved safety codes.
- Based on Ohio Revised Code any rules related to these items cannot be removed from the Ohio Fire Code
- If this statewide fire code is reduced by thirty percent and vital sections are removed, local fire officials will be forced to adopt the International Fire Code and more stringent local codes, this will cause hardships on contractors, owners and citizens of the state.
- Rules are adopted to be consistent with other state codes and must remain in the code. Without them first responders will be unaware that fire protection systems or egress components could be out of service or not functioning properly. This situation creates a life-threatening danger to inhabitants and emergency personnel who are putting their lives on the line responding to fires.

As a result, amendments were placed in the bill which is was voted on and approved by Senate. It is now in the House and we continue to follow the progress to make sure the Ohio Fire Code remains intact. We are also working with Ohio Building Officials and the International Code Council to monitor these bills.

State Fire Marshal's Office:

We work with and continue to have “focus group” meetings with the Ohio State Fire Marshal’s Office representatives addressing ongoing statewide issues related to code enforcement, public education and fire prevention campaigns. Some of the most current issues include:

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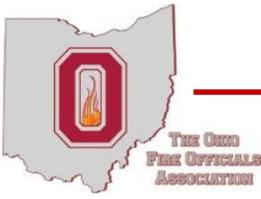
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- We have worked with the Fire Marshal on wording and clarification of a few issues in the new code including CO monitoring and Food Truck issues.
- We assisted and utilized our Chapter Education allowance to set up this year's fire inspector class at the Annual Conference.
- We continue to encourage local fire officials to foster a good working relationship with their local building officials

Sincerely,

Michael J Kocab, Fire Marshal
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