



UNITED FIREFIGHTERS of LOS ANGELES CITY

Local 112 IAFF AFL-CIO-CLC

April 26, 2016

Honorable Paul Krekorian
Chairman, Budget and Finance Committee
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairman Krekorian:

On behalf of the nearly 3,200 Firefighters, Paramedics, Inspectors, Dispatchers, and Pilots who I am honored to represent, I want to give you the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City (UFLAC) perspective on the recently released 2016-17 Fiscal Year budget proposal for the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD).

UFLAC would first like to thank the Mayor and City Council for once again proposing a budget that calls for an increase in funding for the LAFD. We would also like to express our gratitude for the proposed increase of positions in our department and full funding for additional Drill Tower classes in the next Fiscal Year. Finally, we are thankful that the proposed budget provides the final funding necessary to purchase a second set of Personal Protective Equipment (turnouts) for all of our Firefighters in the field. UFLAC has continued to stress the importance of proper safety equipment for our Firefighters and our elected officials have responded by providing the necessary funding to keep our men and women in the field safe. We thank you for this commitment.

LAFD Chief Terrazas recently sent a detailed letter to Chairman Krekorian and the members of the City Council Budget & Finance Committee regarding his additional priority requests for the 2016-17 LAFD Budget. UFLAC thanks Chief Terrazas for continuing to advocate for our department. We support the majority of the Chief's requests and respectfully oppose a couple of them.

We ask that the City Council place a special priority on the following priorities for our Firefighters:

- Restoration of Two Engine Companies
- Additional Position Authorities for the Fire Prevention Bureau
- Fire Station Facilities Maintenance and Repairs

Restoration of Two Engine Companies



Over the past few years, the City of Los Angeles provided funding to restore full staffing for Engine 35 in East Hollywood, Engine 105 in the San Fernando Valley, and most recently Engine 69 in the Pacific Palisades.

Now that we have restored three Engine Companies out of 18 Fire Suppression Ladder Truck Companies and Engine Companies that were cut during the devastating 2011-12 LAFD cuts, we need to continue to prioritize the restoration of additional Engine Companies in the 2016-17 Budget. In doing so, we will continue the process of restoring our previously decimated resources by putting additional flexible, all-risk vehicles in our communities to respond to all types of emergencies.

UFLAC strongly supports Chief Terrazas' request to provide funding to restore Engine Companies at Fire Station 9 in Skid Row and Fire Station 73 in the West San Fernando Valley. For several years now, UFLAC has been advocating for the restoration of Engine 209 at one of the busiest fire stations in the country. We are glad that Chief Terrazas has listened to our request and plans to support our Firefighters with additional, desperately needed resources to serve the Skid Row community.

UFLAC has once again worked closely with the Mayor's office and the LAFD Administration to compete for Federal SAFER Grant funding to restore previously closed positions. While we are hopeful that we receive SAFER grant funds, it is critical that we are not solely reliant on this competitive grant to continue the process of restoring our field resources.

The funding of two additional Engine Companies – either through the SAFER grant or regular City General Funds – should be considered a top priority. UFLAC is aware of the Chief's request to once again provide additional funding in the 2016-17 Budget to add more Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs). These Firefighter/EITs are a critical part of the LAFD public safety network. They are a part of the UFLAC bargaining unit and it is our hope that funding is provided for BOTH the additional Engine Companies and these EIT positions that the Chief has requested. However, in the event that this is not possible, UFLAC implores the Budget and Finance Committee to put a priority on restoring direct suppression and emergency medical resources in the field, in the form of additional Engine Companies.

Additional Position Authorities for the Fire Prevention Bureau

The LAFD Fire Prevention Bureau (FPB) continues to be understaffed and is unable to adequately address the backlog of inspections that have not been completed. Chief Terrazas' request to add funding and position authority for two new Fire Inspectors is a top priority for UFLAC and our Fire Prevention Bureau.

Fire Station Facilities Maintenance and Repairs

UFLAC supports the Chief's modest request to provide additional funding for ongoing maintenance and repairs at our community fire stations. While the City of Los Angeles has done a great job in constructing a number of new fire stations over the past decade,

there are still several aging fire stations that require maintenance and upgrades for basic Firefighter safety. We strongly support this request.

UFLAC OPPOSES a couple of the supplemental requests from the Chief for expansion of two pilot programs that have not yet been fully evaluated and assessed. We oppose:

- Additional Funding for new positions in the Nurse Practitioner Response Unit
- Additional Funding for new positions in the Fast Response Unit.

UFLAC categorically opposes the request for an additional \$319,000 and new position authority in the Nurse Practitioner Response Unit (NPRU) and the request for \$162,000 and new position authority to implement a new Fast Response Vehicle (FRV).

Both the Nurse Practitioner Unit and the Fast Response Vehicles were designed as TEMPORARY, pilot projects that would be assessed over time before they were expanded to include additional positions and funding. This careful assessment of these new pilot programs has not taken place yet; therefore, it would not be prudent to expand either of these pilot programs at this point until we can have a complete determination of their effectiveness and impact on public safety in our communities. UFLAC OPPOSES these funding requests at this time until they have been fully vetted.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our input and concerns. Most importantly, I want to thank you once again for your commitment to the Los Angeles Fire Department and the men and women who have dedicated their careers to saving lives and property in the City of Los Angeles.

The 3,200 Firefighters and Paramedics of the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City look forward to working with the Mayor, the City Council's Budget and Finance Committee, and our Department leadership to ensure that the 2016-17 Fiscal Year budget protects public safety in Los Angeles.

Sincerely,



Frank Lima
President
United Firefighters of Los Angeles City

CC: Los Angeles City Councilmembers
Fire Chief Ralph Terrazas
Board of Fire Commissioners
City Administrative Officer Miguel Santana