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April 21, 2017

Honorable Paul Krekorian
Chair, Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Richard Williams, Legislative Assistant
Office of the City Clerk
200 N. Main Street, Room 300
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2017-18 Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) Proposed Budget. My most sincere appreciation is extended to Mayor Garcetti for a budget that adds \$23.8 million to enhance the LAFD's ability to make our communities the safest in the nation. I am especially appreciative of the Budget and Finance Committee members' support of the collaborative efforts of the LAFD and UFLAC in restoring four engine companies (Engines 105, 35, 69 and 209) and increasing the safety of our firefighters and paramedics.

The Proposed Budget provides funding for three Recruit Academy classes to add 195 new Firefighters. In FY 17-18, LAFD will proceed with the closure in September 2017 of Drill Tower 40, located in San Pedro, which results in training and overtime savings of approximately \$4.8 million. Funding is also provided to meet the Department's technology strategic plan goals toward upgrading and enhancing deployment and communication systems (Fire Station Alerting System, Emergency Response Systems Enhancements, and Network Staffing System). The Budget also provides for various fire safety equipment replacement and operational needs including body armor, diesel exhaust capturing upgrades, and hazardous waste collection services at all fire stations.

Per your instructions, I have identified six critical areas below, in priority order, that were not funded in the Proposed Budget. More complete justifications for each are provided in the Attachment.

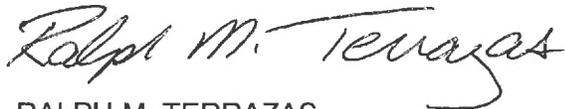
- 1. Restore Two Engine Companies:** Add \$1,067,825 for three months funding in the Unappropriated Balance (UB) and employment authority for six Fire Captain I, six Firefighter III, six Firefighter III/Paramedic, and six Engineer positions to continue the Department's goal of restoring engine companies. The LAFD was recently notified by the California Department of Health Care Services of the opportunity to apply for participation in the Intergovernmental Transfer Program (IGT) to obtain two years of matching funds from the Federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), covering Medi-Cal transports in FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17. Participation, potentially, would result in approximately \$12M net revenues to be received in January/February 2018. The LAFD requests IGT revenues as the funding source for restoration of the two engine

companies. The UB appropriation would be available to fund the two engine companies in the event IGT revenues do not materialize.

2. **Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs):** Add \$230,106 for three months funding and position authority to restore six Firefighter/EIT to Battalions 14 and 9. This request maintains the Department's goal to incrementally restore EIT positions that were deleted in the FY 2010-11 Budget. Approval would result in only three Battalions without EITs which are critical for accountability, situation status, resource status, and emergency safety procedures at every emergency incident.
3. **Diesel Exhaust Capturing System (DECS) –** Add \$250,000 to augment the Mayor's Proposed Budget amount of \$100,000 to continue the second year of a five year phase-in plan to upgrade DECS in all 110 fire facilities to remove hazardous exhaust and accommodate changes in apparatus/equipment.
4. **Fire Psychologist Support:** Add position authority without funding for one Fire Psychologist to provide timely delivery of behavioral health and wellness services to more than 3,000 sworn members. The Department will absorb the \$117,940 cost of the position.
5. **Plan Check Staffing:** Add \$321,516 funding and employment authority for three Fire Inspector II positions in Development Services to address increased citywide construction activity and mitigate back logs. These positions are fee supported.
6. **Return to Work Unit – Position Control Officer (PCO):** Add \$112,637 for nine months funding and employment authority for a Fire Captain I on special duty to accelerate members on injury leave back to full or light duty through increased monitoring and interaction with medical providers. This will reduce workers compensation costs, enhance Department productivity, and reduce backfill costs.

I look forward to discussing the above issues with the members of the Budget and Finance Committee and the City Council. I am aware the City is still facing significant fiscal challenges. Therefore, I appreciate your consideration of my requests to enhance firefighter and public safety if additional funding is available.

Sincerely,



RALPH M. TERRAZAS
Fire Chief

Attachment

Budget Program	Priority Req. No.	FY 2017-18 Budget Request Fire Department	Amount
		New Requests	
AF3803 Fire Suppression	1	<p>Restoration of Two Engine Companies: Add three months funding in the Unappropriated Balance and employment authority for 6 Captain I, 6 Engineer, 6 Firefighter III and 6 Firefighter III/Paramedic positions for the restoration of two engine companies.</p> <p>Of eleven engine companies closed at the height of the recession, four engines (105, 35, 69 and 209) have since been restored to respond to "All Risk" calls for service. The restoration of engines will significantly improve the Department's ability to manage call loads and response times for all incident types, and ensure firefighter safety by managing resources responsibly and reducing fatigue. The assignment of these engines will be based on an assessment of various risk factors and call load.</p>	\$ 1,067,825
AF3803 Fire Suppression	2	<p>Emergency Incident Technicians (EITs): Add three months funding and employment authority for 6 Firefighter/EIT positions to restore Battalions 14 and 9.</p> <p>The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires an Incident Commander to have a staff aide to assist in providing for accountability, situation status, resource status, and emergency safety procedures that are required at every emergency incident. Five of the 14 battalions operate without EITs due to deletion of positions in FY 2010-11. The battalions without EITs include: 2, 6, 9, 14 and 17. While the Department developed alternative methods to assist the Battalion Chief at an incident in maintaining these critical command and control functions, none provided the required consistent expertise and continuity offered by an EIT, which has negatively impacted the efficiency of the command post and posed risks to firefighter safety. This request is part of a multi-year plan to restore EITs incrementally.</p>	\$ 230,106
AG3848 Procurement, Maintenance & Repair	3	<p>Diesel Exhaust Capture System (Plymovent): Add additional funding of \$250,000 to the \$100,000 included in the Mayor's Proposed Budget for a total of \$350,000. This will expedite the upgrade of the DECS in all 110 fire stations and maintenance shops to remove hazardous exhaust and accommodate changes in firefighting apparatus and equipment. This request represents the second year of a five-year phase in plan.</p>	\$ 250,000
AG3850 General Administration & Support	4	<p>Fire Psychologist Support: Add position authority without funding for one Fire Psychologist to provide the needed capacity to deliver behavioral health and wellness services to more than 3,000 sworn members. The Department will absorb the \$117,940 cost of the position.</p> <p>Psychological services are critical to addressing the high workload, the stressful nature of field calls, and the complexity of incidents that can impact the emotional and physical well-being of first responders. PTSD and potential suicides are issues of concern among members, as well. The current allocation of one Fire Psychologist to serve over 3,300 sworn members has been inadequate in addressing the full scope of the Behavioral Health Program to provide direct services, maintain a peer support program, provide all the appropriate trainings and respond to critical incidents. A review of psychological support services offered in major fire departments such as New York, Houston and Austin, as well as psychological resources at LAPD, further documents the definitive shortage of resources provided to LAFD's membership.</p>	\$ -
AF3806 Fire Prevention	5	<p>Plan Check Staffing: Add nine months funding and employment authority three Fire Inspector II positions in Fire Development Services to address increased citywide construction activity and plan check workload, improve public counter wait times, and mitigate back logs to ensure that all fire/life safety requirements are met expeditiously.</p>	\$ 321,516

Budget Program	Priority Req. No.	FY 2017-18 Budget Request Fire Department	Amount
AG3850 General Administration & Support	6	<p>Return to Work - Position Control Officer (PCO): Add nine months funding and position authority for a Fire Captain I on special duty to accelerate members on injury leave back to full or light duty through increased monitoring and interaction with medical providers.</p> <p>LAFD does not have the resources to staff a Return to Work program for workers' compensation claims, and, therefore, the Medical Liaison Unit (MLU) currently manages all IOD and NIOD cases. The MLU's primary function is to perform claim initiation, ensure that injured members receive the immediate care required, and maintain liaison between members and Personnel's Medical Services Division, the treating physicians/hospitals, and Third Party Administrators.</p> <p>On average, MLU receives three to five new workers' compensation claims daily, amounting to 1,200 new claims annually. There are approximately 2,600 open claims managed annually by the sworn members. This equates to a workload ratio of 1:650 in comparison to the industry standard of 1:150. This staffing is not sufficient to effectively manage past the initial care stage, considering the approximately 270 members who are on some form of leave on any given day, including, but not limited to, members on Modified and Light Duty and members with temporary and permanent restrictions.</p>	\$ 112,637
		Total	\$ 1,982,084