



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Senator Helming Calls for Moratorium and Further Review of New OSHA Regulations for Fire and EMS Services

PAMELA HELMING April 8, 2024

| ISSUE: **FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

STATEMENT

— *from* —

NYS SENATOR PAM HELMING

Representing the 54th District

Dear Governor Hochul,

The U.S Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has recently proposed new amendments to its Fire Brigade Standard, 29 CFR 1910.156. These new regulations will apply to all fire departments in New York State, including volunteer departments.

These proposed regulations include required updates to personal protective equipment (PPE), changes to first responder medical and physical requirements, and additional training requirements, among many others. In fact, these proposed changes total over six hundred pages.

These new OSHA requirements will place further stress on already struggling departments. Fire departments across New York have struggled to recruit and retain personnel in recent years, an issue which will be exacerbated by these new requirements. Updates to equipment and procedures will also impose new costs on departments, many of which already face financial challenges.

While we support efforts to ensure the safety of our fire department personnel, many departments, and the Firefighters Association of the State of New York (FASNY) have raised concerns regarding the impact of these new regulations on departments' ability to continue to protect the public.

To ensure that these new regulations do not place undue burdens on New York State fire departments, we ask that you place a moratorium on the implementation of these new regulations for fire and EMS services. During this moratorium, we also ask that you establish a Blue-Ribbon Commission to review these new regulations and provide guidance to fire departments to help them comply with these mandates.

Thank you for your consideration.