



FAIRHAVEN FIRE FIGHTERS

LOCAL 1555

Kevin Gonsalves
President

Representatives

*Chauncy Burr
Nathan Rebello
Maggie Rocha
Ryan Amado
Troy Decouto*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2023

ATTN: RESPONSE TO TOWN ATTEMPTING TO DISMISS NEWLY HIRED FIREFIGHTERS OVER PROP 2 ½ OVERRIDE

FAIRHAVEN, MASSACHUSETTS -

In January of this year, the Town of Fairhaven agreed to a settlement with Local 1555 in which the Town agreed to hire and employ four additional firefighters. This small addition still does not provide our department with adequate staffing; however, it is a step in the right direction. Following an intensive study, the IAFF found that the Fairhaven Fire Department would only be properly staffed with a minimum of fourteen (14) Firefighters per shift. Currently, our department averages 6 staff members per shift. This is not only dangerous to our members, but also a disservice to the townspeople we are sworn to protect. Our department desperately needs more staff. There is no way around it.

During talks with the town in January, our elected leaders agreed to the additional hiring of four firefighters and did not raise any concerns about funding these positions. Now, months later, after already hiring these members, the Town attempting to use and leverage our Union to assist in the passage of a Proposition 2 ½ override. These elected officials are attempting to tie the override to its ability to retain two of the four firefighters. The Town's politicization of the public safety of our community and threat to purposefully cut our staffing is not only dangerous, but downright offensive to our hardworking, dedicated, and professional firefighters.

These additional firefighters are not part of some future plan — they are hard-working professionals who have already been hired and have begun their training. Their livelihoods are not a political chip that can be used by Town officials to force our Union into supporting Proposition 2 ½. We call on the Town officials to stop playing politics with public safety and to honor the agreement we reached in January.

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