



For Immediate Release:
September 8, 2015

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New York's Professional Firefighters Denounce Political Hit Piece in Long Beach
False flyer mailed to city residents insults career firefighters.

The New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association (NYSPFFA) is vehemently condemning political flyers critical of a former Long Beach city firefighter who is contesting fellow Democratic candidates in an upcoming primary.

The firefighter who is the subject of the flyer, David Yolinsky, also is a paramedic and vice-president of Local 287. The flyers inaccurately portray him abusing city tax dollars while he served the city.

Yolinsky's was one of five positions cut in February, despite the Local's insistence that public safety would be jeopardized.

"While David Yolinsky is unfortunately no longer on the job, this disgusting cartoonish mailer is an insult and an attack on every man and woman who ever answered the public's call for help wearing a firefighters' uniform," said NYSPFFA President Michael McManus. "It is an affront to anyone who has ever been injured or lost in the line of duty, as well as their families. This is a new and shameful low in politics, and one that should disgust the taxpayers of Long Beach and any other right-minded person in this state."

Yolinsky, a decorated professional and five-year department veteran, is one of five democrats vying for three council seats. His vocal opponents within the party are candidates Len Torres, Anthony Eramo and Karen Adamo.

"Torres, Eramo and Adamo should be asked directly if they had any prior knowledge about the production and distribution of these flyers," McManus said. "They should take ownership of this deplorable act if they are behind it, or call out those responsible."

The flyers:

- Depict Yolinsky shooting pool in the firehouse -- *but the truth is* that there hasn't been a pool table there in eight years, three years before he was hired!
- Suggest he worked an average seven days per month -- *but the truth is* firefighters work 24-hour shifts, or at least 168 hours per month!
- Accuse Yolinsky of running a full-time business from the firehouse -- *but the truth is* that he and partners started a charitable T-shirt business after Hurricane Sandy, and the business was NOT operated from the firehouse!
- Declare he fought only two fires in 2014 -- *but the truth is* Long Beach firefighters responded to nearly 4,800 calls in 2014 – 75 percent of which were medical in nature!
- Complain about his salary. But the truth is that as with all civil service positions, firefighters' salaries are set by the city after collective bargaining, and the contract was negotiated in 2005, four years before Yolinsky was on the job!
- Complain that Yolinsky cooked dinner and alleges he did his personal laundry at the firehouse. The truth is that firefighters on duty 24 hours at a stretch necessarily cook for themselves and clean uniforms and firehouse linen, not their civilian clothing.

Local 287 President Bill Piazza joined McManus in his harsh criticism of the flyer.

“It is hard to fathom that adults would come together and think something like this was even remotely appropriate,” Piazza said. “Once the public learns who is responsible we hope they ask themselves, ‘Are these the types of people who deserve the public’s trust’”