



## New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association, Inc.

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**SAMUEL A. FRESINA**  
President

**JAMES J. MCGOWAN**  
Secretary-Treasurer

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### **CHAPLAIN**

**REV. JOHN TALLMAN**  
40 Collins Place  
Albany, NY 12208

May 7, 2024

**RE: AN ACT to amend the general municipal law and the retirement and social security law, in relation to increasing the special accidental death benefit of certain deceased members**

S.9076 (Gounardes)  
A.10111 (Pheffer Amato)

### **MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT**

**The New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association (NYSPPFA), I.A.F.F. AFL-CIO**, a not-for-profit association representing 18,000 fire fighters in 110 Locals in various cities, villages, and towns across New York State, strongly supports the enactment of this legislation, which will increase certain special accidental death benefits to account for a cost of living increase for all widows and widowers of firefighters killed in the line-of-duty.

Annually since 1978, the Legislature has passed and the Governor has signed into law a cost-of-living increase and a one-year escalation for all New York State widows and widowers of police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty. The intent of the original 1978 law was to increase their benefits to an amount that would take into account the impact of inflation; however, the law failed to provide for annual cost of living increases past July 1, 1979. Meanwhile, the cost of living has increased well over 3% each year, including some periods of double-digit inflation.

Without legislation increasing the special accidental death benefits to account for the increase in the cost-of-living, these widows and widowers will not receive the benefits originally envisioned by the Legislature, thereby creating an undue and unnecessary hardship on them. This legislation will provide, at least, some relief to the widows and widowers of New York State's bravest citizens, who gave their lives in service to the people of New York State.



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As with the aforementioned cost-of-living legislation, there is no cost to the localities, as the State would reimburse them for the small increase in cost.

Therefore, NYSPPFA strongly supports the enactment of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel A. Fresina, President  
New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association