



New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association, Inc.

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REV. JOHN TALLMAN
40 Collins Place
Albany, NY 12208

May 29, 2024

RE: AN ACT to amend the public officers law, in relation to the disclosure of public employee disciplinary records

S.5500-B (Skoufis)
A.6146-B (Buttenschon)

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 require all state and local agencies subject to New York State's Freedom of Information Law to develop a policy that will provide notification to public employees when the agency is responding to a request for an employee's disciplinary records.

In 2020 New York State repealed section 50-a of the civil rights law, which had previously prohibited (unless via a court order) the disclosure of personnel and disciplinary records of police officers, fire fighters, and correction officers in New York State. In addition, the state's Freedom of Information Law was amended to allow the public to access the personnel records (with redactions) of those employed by law enforcement agencies (police officers, correction officers, and fire fighters).

This amendment to the public officers law will have no impact on the ability for an individual to FOIL a public employee's disciplinary record, it will merely ensure the impacted employee is notified when his or her personal information has been released to the public.

We believe that this is a necessary change to the initial law from 2020 and that our fire fighters and their families have a right to know when their records are being searched and viewed.

Therefore, NYSPPFA strongly supports the enactment of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel A. Fresina, President

New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association

AFFILIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS IAFF, AFL, CIO, NEW YORK STATE – AFL-CIO

