

10. **Discussion and possible action on the Texas State Association of Fire Fighters resolution regarding a commission study on the administrative attachment of the commission to another state agency.**



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August 8, 2013

Commissioner Steven C. Tull, Chair
Texas Commission on Fire Protection
1701 North Congress, Suite 105
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Commissioner Tull,

Attached please find a position paper written on behalf of the members of the Texas Fire Chiefs Association. We would ask that this document be distributed to the other Commissioners as well as included in the packet at the next Commission meeting.

As you know, the TFCA believes strongly in the Commission and its mission. It is our earnest hope and intent to work with other stakeholder groups during the interim between legislative sessions collaboratively to work towards a solution of our current challenges.

We look forward to working with you and the other leaders of the Texas fire service in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Isbell".

Chief Robert Isbell, Midland Fire Department
President, Texas Fire Chiefs Association



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The purpose of this document is to offer to the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TFCP) the assistance and support of the Texas Fire Chief's Association (TFCA) as the Commission goes forward after the 83rd Legislative Session of Texas. The TFCA is a respected leader in the Fire Service of Texas.

As most are aware, the Legislative Session was very active and caused some considerable consternation throughout the Texas Fire Service that pitted stakeholders to take a myriad of positions on the future of the Commission and its very existence.

This being said, the TFCA is dedicated to assisting the Commission in going forward to resolve the issues that are currently being faced. It is paramount to identify a process to include all the stakeholders in determining the future and placement of the TFCP; with the goal to be bringing about a united Fire Service in Texas to continue the safety and health of our Firefighters and our citizens.

It is the TFCA's understanding that the Commission is considering a study of the agency and its functions to determine if the commission should reside in another agency or continue to stand alone. The TFCA has discussed the study and as an Association we feel we would bring considerable value to the study and are offering to partner with the Commission as you embark on this chapter of the Commission.

As the Commission goes forward with the discussion of a study, the TFCA, believes first and foremost, that the Commission remain a stand alone agency to continue its work in providing safety and health to the Firefighters and citizens of Texas. Additionally, it is paramount to remove the rider that has caused the fees to escalate to unpalatable levels. Along those lines we would like to offer some suggestions to the Commission for topics to be discussed:

- Hire a dynamic Executive Director.
- Evaluate the existing Strategic Plan for practicality and functionality.
- Identify alternative funding streams for the commission.
- Identify the impact the inflated fees have had on the fire service

- Identify the impact to the fire service if the commission is not stand alone.
- Make all provided services transparent and illustrate the value of each.
- Feasibility of being self sustaining and having the fees lowered.
- Identify the impact of services from lowering the fees.
- Identify an alternate State agency for the TCFP to be attached, and still be able to carry out the mission; if stand alone is not the option.
- Transition plan for the attachment of another agency.
- A report on feasibility of collaboration initiatives with other State agencies to gain fiscal efficiency.
- Firefighter safety related correlation to the commissions existence. (Are we a safer profession due to direct TCFP's programs?)
- Establish a Management Advisory Committee similar to the Firefighter Advisory Committee to advise on financial impact of commission mandates.

While this list of suggestions is broad and will require considerable discussion. We of the TFCA believe it is necessary to bring the varied stakeholders together in a thorough and transparent manner to discuss the future of the TFCP.

The TFCA stands ready to assist the Commission as they go forward. We have considerable expertise and a legion of members to tap for information and assistance.