

FIRE FIGHTER TRAINING DIVISION
ADMINISTRATIVE RULES PUBLIC HEARING

March 24, 2021

Prepared by



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STATE OF MICHIGAN
LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS - BUREAU OF FIRE SERVICES
FIRE FIGHTER TRAINING DIVISION
ADMINISTRATIVE RULES PUBLIC HEARING

Bureau of Fire Services

Via Zoom Video Conference

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 11:00 a.m.

Members Present: Ann Searles, Bureau of Fire Services Deputy Director
Andrea Keown, Bureau of Fire Services
Kevin Schlmeyer, Michigan Fire Marshall
Robert Stokes, Regional Coordinator FFTD
Dan Hammerberg, Regional Coordinator FFTD

Also Present: Hollie Metts, Assistant to the Michigan Fire Marshall

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(Notice of Public Hearing)	

1 Via Zoom Video Conference

2 Wednesday, March 24, 2021 - 11:00 a.m.

3 MS. SEARLES: Good morning. My name is Ann
4 Searles, and I am the Deputy Director for the Bureau of Fire
5 Services in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory
6 Affairs. I will be conducting the hearing today. This is a
7 public hearing on the proposed administrative rules
8 entitled, "Fire Fighters Training Council General Rules."
9 We are conducting the hearing as required by the
10 administrative procedures Act to allow the public to comment
11 on the proposed changes to this rule set.

12 As with all other public hearings on draft rule
13 sets, the only items discussed during this hearing will be
14 the proposed changes to the rule set. This hearing will not
15 be covering any questions or discussions on any other
16 issues. We are calling this hearing to order at 11:00 a.m.
17 on March 24th, 2021 via Zoom to comply with the statutory
18 requirement. The Notice of Public Hearing was published in
19 three newspapers of general circulation; The Grand Rapids
20 Press, The Oakland Press, The Mining Journal, all on March
21 1st, 2021, as well as with the Michigan Register, Issue
22 3-2021, published on March 1st, 2021.

23 All comments should relate directly to the
24 proposed rules. We will take comments in the following
25 manner: For those wishing -- or using the video conference

1 portion, please use the "Raise your hand" feature in Zoom.
2 Let me share my screen to show you how to do that. Can
3 everybody see my screen?

4 (Shares document via video)

5 MS. SEARLES: Sorry about that. Hold on. Let me
6 try that again. Can everybody see my screen that shows the
7 participants down at the bottom? Andrea, can you see that?

8 MS. KEOWN: (Shaking head negatively)

9 MS. SEARLES: No? Well, I guess it's not going to
10 show. What you will do is look down at the bottom of the
11 screen; it shows "participants." You will click on the
12 participants located in the menu bar there, and then the
13 option to "raise your hand" is available at the bottom of
14 the participant list. If you don't see this option, you
15 will need to expand the participants list. I will call on
16 individuals to speak, and they will be un-muted at that
17 time.

18 For participants that are available only by
19 telephone, after the video participants have finished, we
20 will call off the last four digits of your phone number, and
21 we will ask you if you wish to make a comment. If you have
22 a comment but do not wish to speak, please note that the
23 department will also accept written statements, emailed or
24 postmarked, to LARA-BFS@michigan.gov until 5:00 p.m. today.
25 The Bureau will not accept public comments on the Rules in

1 the chat function in Zoom. If you have previously submitted
2 comments in writing to the Bureau, it is not necessary for
3 your to repeat your comments on the record today. Comments
4 made in writing will be received and considered by the
5 department in the same manner as comments made during the
6 public hearing. Those making comments during this hearing
7 should clearly -- should speak clearly and slowly, and say
8 and spell your name, and advise us if you are speaking on
9 behalf of an organization.

10 Each person will have the opportunity to speak
11 only once, and comments will be limited to three minutes per
12 person. The speaker will be verbally stopped at three
13 minutes -- at the three-minute mark, and we will move on to
14 the next speaker. The department staff and the Bureau of
15 Fire Services includes myself and Andrea Keown. Is there
16 anyone who wishes to make comments on the Fire Fighters
17 Training Council General Rules? If so, please, on the
18 bottom of your screen, click on the participant list, and
19 select "raise your hand."

20 MFIS Administrator.

21 KYLE SVOBODA

22 MR. SVOBODA: Kyle Svoboda, K-y-l-e,
23 S-v-o-b-o-d-a, current president of the Michigan Fire
24 Inspector Society, and that is who I am representing today.
25 First of all, I wanted to say "thank you" to the committee

1 members, who are sitting on the committee to review the
2 rules. We realize there has been quite a few hours of your
3 time in meetings and away from the office to make sure that
4 this process is done in a fair manner, and we appreciate
5 that time.

6 Overall, the Board sees that the rules are going
7 to make the Fire Service better, and throughout the process,
8 our representative on the e-board has done a very good job
9 talking about our questions and comments and concerns, and
10 relaying those answers back to us.

11 All things considered, it does appear that there
12 is one major concern of talking with a few of the groups,
13 and realistically, the Board recognizes that we started with
14 dozens of issues and concerns, and we've whittled it down to
15 one, and we think that, you know, it should be considered a
16 win at the end of the day, and it shows the process works.
17 The one point that we were wanting to mention and maybe
18 bring to the attention and talk about the possible concerns
19 that might come about of it, is obviously the reciprocity.
20 That's the one major concern that we have made aware of with
21 other organization and other groups.

22 Section 29.403, number 5, what's unclear to us is
23 the process for obtaining the MOU, what the standard of
24 allowing for an MOU is, and what the extent is going to be
25 for allowing MOU's outside of the State of Michigan. We've

1 had many conversations with our community members, as well
2 as other members out there at large in the Fire Service, and
3 there has been lots of confusion as to what's going to be
4 allowed, what's not going to be allowed, and our
5 representative, at the end of the day, has assured us that
6 the intent is not to be a negative impact on our members.
7 And so with this in mind, all of our significant concerns
8 with the fire inspectors have been addressed. We do realize
9 it's a democratic process and votes counted, and our
10 executive board supports our vote on the rules from our
11 representatives, and we support the rules moving forward to
12 JCAR. Thank you.

13 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Chris Mantels.

14 CHRIS MANTELS

15 MR. MANTELS: Good morning. Chris Mantels,
16 C-h-r-i-s, M-a-n-t-e-l-s. I would also like to thank all of
17 you for the time and the opportunity to speak today. I am
18 the deputy chief of a combination department made up of six
19 career firefighters and 25 paid-on-call firefighters. I am
20 also a member of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters
21 Union, the Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association,
22 the Michigan State Fireman's Association, the Michigan
23 Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Michigan Fire Inspector
24 Society.

25 I very much appreciate all of the time and efforts

1 the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council has spent
2 drafting the administrative rules. I know they have spent
3 more than 150 hours throughout 40 or more meetings-at-work
4 sessions. In the Fire Service, we have a saying, "We don't
5 train until we get it right, we train until we can't get it
6 wrong." In my opinion, even with all the time spent by the
7 Council on the rules, they still have a few sections of the
8 draft rules wrong. We have over 30,000 firefighters in the
9 State of Michigan, and according to data from FEMA, 86
10 percent are volunteers or primarily volunteer departments.

11 The draft rules are going to hold 86 percent of
12 firefighters to the same training requirements as the 13
13 percent of career firefighters in Michigan. I am very much
14 in support of well-trained fire fighters, whether volunteer,
15 paid-on-call, or career. However, we have to find the
16 balance of what is realistic and obtainable for our
17 volunteer agencies that make up 86 percent of the
18 firefighters in the state. Every fire department in the
19 United States is struggling with recruitment and retention,
20 and if we set the bar an unachievable height with annual
21 training requirements, we risk losing even more qualified
22 personnel.

23 As a senior command officer, it is my duty to make
24 sure my department is compliant with MIOSHA Part 74, and my
25 personnel are trained and retrained with the duties

1 commensurate with their job. The draft rules do not need to
2 micromanage what MIOASHA has had in place for years. The
3 current draft rules to not treat the different fire service
4 disciplines the same. I currently hold a Pro Board Fire
5 Instructor II certificate the State of Michigan will not
6 accept, and as I interpret the draft rules, may never accept
7 unless a memorandum of understanding is signed with the
8 parole board agencies. For many years, Michigan State
9 Police has taught arson school to fire investigators, and
10 the Michigan Fire Inspector Society has taught the NFPA
11 inspector program. Both programs have awarded a Pro Board
12 certificate that has been accepted by the Bureau of Fire
13 Services without a memorandum of understanding.

14 Why now are we singling out once accredited
15 organization in Pro Board by requiring an (inaudible). The
16 draft rules need to remove any reference to MOU's and allow
17 Pro Board, IFSAC, and National Fire Academy certificates to
18 be accepted in their entirety for both in-state and out-of-
19 state candidates. I and several others spoke on this at
20 several of the 40 work sessions with the Training Council;
21 however, it appears to have fallen on deaf ears, as the
22 draft rules are still not right.

23 I would respectfully request that the current
24 draft rules be denied moving forward for adoption as
25 currently written. In my opinion, the draft administrative

1 rules need to return to the Michigan Fire Fighters Training
2 Council for amendments to the reciprocity and training hour
3 requirement sections. Thank you for your time.

4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Exactly.

5 (Off the record interruption)

6 MS. SEARLES: Shaun Abbey.

7 SHAUN ABBEY

8 MR. ABBEY: Good morning. Shaun Abbey, S-h-a-u-n,
9 A-b-b-e-y. I'm a battalion chief with the Kentwood Fire
10 Department and oversee our training program. I speak in
11 favor of moving the Act forward to the JCAR process, and
12 support the amendments made. I'll be very brief and just
13 say that all of our organizations and the whole Fire Service
14 has had input on what this looks like at this point, and
15 there is a lot of time that has been spent by a lot of
16 people over the course to get us to where we are.

17 I think it's a fair document, and it -- it's going
18 to move the Fire Service forward, continue to make our
19 communities safe, and our firefighters safe, and the
20 residents of Michigan safe by providing better training.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. SEARLES: Mark Fankhauser. Can you un-mute,
23 Mark?

24 MR. FANKHAUSER: Can you hear me now?

25 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

1 MARK FANKHAUSER

2 MR. FANKHAUSER: Sorry about that glitch. Good
3 Morning, everyone. Mark Fankhauser, spelled, M-a-r-k,
4 F-a-n-k-h-a-u-s-e-r. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for
5 your time; thank you for the opportunity to address you. I
6 hail from Cedar Springs, Michigan; however, I am a fire
7 captain for the Grand Rapids Fire Department. Today, I am
8 speaking on my own behalf. I stand in support of Act 291.
9 As an engaged and active member of the Michigan Fire
10 Service, I (inaudible) our entire (inaudible) position is to
11 support this -- that all members of the Michigan Fire
12 Service deserves the best possible education and standards
13 to clearly define a process to move forward in the Michigan
14 Fire Service.

15 It should not make a difference which municipality
16 you hail from. Regardless if it is completely volunteer or
17 career, every fire service member should be held to the same
18 standard that is recognizable and measurable to an
19 established standard. Our communities, regardless if it's
20 from Bruce Crossing in the UP to the City of Detroit in the
21 lower peninsula, those communities and those members deserve
22 our best, and by adopting Act 291, this is clearly a step in
23 the right direction. Thank you for your time. I yield back
24 my time.

25 MS. SEARLES: Michael McLeieer.

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MICHAEL MCLEIEER

MR. MCLEIEER: Okay. Thank you. Michael
McLeieer, M-i-c-h-a-e-l, last name,
M-c, capital, L-e-i-e-e-r. I'm the immediate past president
of the Michigan State Fireman's Association and today I am
the official spokesperson for the MSFA. Michigan State
Fireman's Association represents 1,883 firefighters, company
officers, and fire chiefs across the State of Michigan. I'm
offering the following testimony to proposed Rules
2019-21 LR regarding the Fire Fighter Training requirements.
Our organization strives to ensure those on the front line
within the Fire Service are provided extensive training and
instruction so they can perform their duties that not only
protects the public, but also recognizes the dangers
inherent with the profession so they can have the tools to
protect themselves.

Our review of the proposed rules has raised a
significant concern regarding the training requirements
proposed, and if they actually improve how we perform our
duties for our communities. Although we believe the
intentions behind the proposed rules are genuine, if
enacted, they could have a negative impact on our ability to
effectively and efficiently serve our communities, and
increases our challenges with regards to recruitment and
retention of our firefighters.

1 The following outlines the concerns specific to
2 the proposed rules: Reciprocity recognition for
3 credentialing, proposed Rule 29.404. Pro Board is the
4 accrediting body for agencies that certify candidates to the
5 disciplines and levels identified in the National Fire
6 Protection Association, NFPA, professional standards.
7 Currently, there are over 70 agencies accredited by the Pro
8 Board, and those offer accredited certification to fire
9 service professionals across the country and around the
10 globe. The requirement of the Bureau of Fire Services
11 maintaining an MOU with multiple Pro Board approved
12 organizations across the country is an administrative
13 redundancy and does not enhance firefighter training in any
14 meaningful capacity. We encourage the Board to replace the
15 proposed administrative burdensome language with the
16 following that adheres to the intent of PA 291:

17 "The Bureau shall recognize and offer reciprocity
18 to any individual holding or obtaining a certification
19 from a nationally recognized, accredited organization
20 that meets the NFPA standard at the time of issue."

21 In closing, ensuring that all fire service
22 personnel receive the necessary training to perform their
23 duties effectively and safely is of primary importance to
24 our villages, cities and townships. We need to provide our
25 firefighters with every opportunity to obtain nationally

1 recognized certification and additional professional
2 development opportunities. I hold numerous Pro Board
3 certifications and know firsthand the benefits of
4 recognizing reciprocity. I appreciate the opportunity to
5 provide input on these rules and consideration of the
6 changes outlined above. Thank you so much for your time.

7 MS. SEARLES: Mark Docherty.

8 MARK DOCHERTY

9 MR. DOCHERTY: Good morning. Again, I would like
10 to also thank everybody for all their hard work. This has
11 been a very collaborative effort over the last few years,
12 many hours put involved, much input. But with a
13 collaborative effort, you're going to have some issues.
14 You're not going to always get your way. And that's the
15 whole point, is everybody was allowed to express their
16 concerns, many changes were made, and it was voted through a
17 democratic process to move forward.

18 So -- I guess I have to state my name, too. Mark
19 Docherty, M-a-r-k, D-o-c-h-e-r-t-y. I am a battalion chief
20 with the City of Sterling Heights Fire Department. I am
21 also the president of the Michigan Professional Fire
22 Fighters Union. Continuing on, this was a democratic
23 process; these concerns were addressed; the reciprocity was
24 addressed. We don't feel the claims they make are true. So
25 I support, obviously, 100 percent moving this forward.

1 Let's move this, due process. It was voted out by a great
2 majority of the Training Council to move forward based on
3 these concerns.

4 One thing I do want to address is the comments
5 about training. The comments that this will somehow impact
6 the paid -- the on-call and volunteer. It's ridiculous.
7 Training directly affects the safety of firefighters. Why
8 do they not deserve the same level of safety as we do as
9 career firefighters? These aren't requirements that are too
10 much. Right now, currently, we don't require anything, any
11 training whatsoever in continuing education for training our
12 firefighters; nothing. They cannot train again for the rest
13 of their career and they would not meet -- or they meet the
14 guidelines. This is putting a base in there to say that you
15 do have to do some training. It's for their safety, and
16 ultimately for the safety of our residents.

17 So we strongly support training. We strongly
18 support this baseline -- and this isn't saying this is the
19 minimal -- or the most they have to have; this is the
20 minimal. I agree 100 percent there is more training based
21 on your response types that you may have to get through
22 years, but this is a base. Please move this forward. This
23 has been a collaborative effort. We support it 100 percent,
24 and we would like to see them adopted. Thank you.

25 MS. SEARLES: Jack Johnson, Jr.

1 JACK JOHNSON, JR.

2 MR. JOHNSON: Hi. My name is Jack Johnson, Jr.,
3 spelled, J-a-c-k, J-o-h-n-s-o-n, J-r. I currently live in
4 Montcalm County, and I am a battalion chief with the City of
5 Grand Rapids Fire Department representing my own views here
6 today. And I will be brief, and just let you know that I
7 support moving this forward. Thank you.

8 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Richard Clark.

9 RICHARD CLARK

10 MR. CLARK: Good morning. My name is Richard
11 Clark, R-i-c-h-a-r-d, C-l-a-r-k. I'm a captain with the
12 Grand Rapids Fire Department. I live in Kent County. I
13 wholehordidly (phonetic) -- wholeheartedly -- excuse me
14 support this. Training should be -- recognized and accepted
15 by everybody in the Fire Service, regardless of volunteer,
16 paid on-call, or professional. And that's all I
17 wanted (inaudible). Thank you.

18 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Bob Cairnduff.

19 ROBERT CAIRNDUFF

20 MR. CAIRNDUFF: Thank you. Robert Cairnduff, City
21 of Fenton Fire Department; R-o-b-e-r-t, C-a-i-r-n-d-u-f-f.
22 Here today -- I do disagree with some of the comments today.
23 I am in full support of the letter that the Michigan
24 Association of Fire Chiefs submitted with the points that
25 they established. There are differences between career,

1 paid-on-call, and volunteer departments, and those concerns
2 are not met by the current proposal.

3 We are struggling as it is to get members, keep
4 members. It is a national problem, and the increased
5 training requirements, that although were not identified
6 specifically, will have an impact on the smaller
7 departments. And that is my opinion, and I will be done
8 with that point. Thank you.

9 MS. SEARLES: Alex Koshorek.

10 MR. KOSHOREK: Hello. Can you hear me?

11 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

12 MR. KOSHOREK: I just am here to --

13 MS. SEARLES: Could you state your name, please?

14 MR. KOSHOREK: -- in favor of --

15 MS. SEARLES: Could you state and spell your name,
16 please?

17 ALEX KOSHOREK

18 MR. KOSHOREK: I'm sorry. It's, A-l-e-x,
19 K-o-s-h-o-r-e- -- and I am just here to speak in favor of
20 the proposed changes. I feel that these changes are
21 necessary and overdue. I think that the committee was made
22 up and diverse enough that it performed its due diligence,
23 and -- throughout the process, and it is time that we
24 implement these changes, help us achieve a level of
25 professionalism that the Fire Service and our citizens

1 Fire Service and instructor in and around the state of
2 Michigan. I appreciate all of the efforts of the committee,
3 and I am in full support of moving this process forward as
4 it stands.

5 As we evolve and walk through the evolution of the
6 Fire Service, everybody always has to adapt to change. We
7 may not always like it, but it's something that we do have
8 to strive through and live through. We have had plenty of
9 time to collaborate, discuss, and sometimes agree to
10 disagree on many issues that come amongst us in the Fire
11 Service. However, the standards and the rules that are
12 placed within this process now and moving forward will
13 provide something that is measurable. We will establish a
14 standard that Michigan once had as first in leading in the
15 nation many decades ago and will provide accountability and
16 safety for everyone involved. No one always likes change,
17 but change is going to be needed, and this, overall, is the
18 right direction to go. Again, I am in full support of this
19 process moving forward. Thank you for your time, and good
20 to see everybody today.

21 MS. SEARLES: Adam Carroll.

22 ADAM CARROLL

23 MR. CARROLL: Hello. My name is Adam Carroll,
24 A-d-a-m, C-a-r-r-o-l-l. I'm the fire chief for the
25 Heartland Deerfield Fire Authority who I am representing

1 today. I am also chair of the Livingston County Training
2 Committee, a board member of the Michigan Fire Service
3 Instructors Association, and a member of both the Michigan
4 Fire Inspector Society and the Michigan Association of Fire
5 Chiefs. I have been actively involved in training for over
6 25 years, and I thank you for the opportunity to discuss
7 what is likely the most significant event for the Michigan
8 Fire Service in decades.

9 These rules are almost great, save for a couple of
10 simple flaws that can be easily rectified. Specifically
11 regarding proposed Rule 29.405, the law does a wonderful job
12 of identifying and calling for what is required for a person
13 to demonstrate competency for certification, that is written
14 and practical testing to national standards. This ensures
15 that anyone who wants to certify must demonstrate or perform
16 competently all of the KSA's, or knowledge, skills, and
17 abilities commensurate to that certification. In their
18 current form, the rules extrapolate this testing-for-
19 certification language into a sitting-for-submission
20 language that does not lead to a student's success. In
21 reality, we know the students learn in a variety of ways and
22 at different rates through a combination of visual, audible,
23 reading and kinesthetic activities, along with varying
24 combinations of quality instruction, coaching, repetition,
25 and evaluation.

1 To force every student into learning by enduring
2 is a disservice to any student and is contrary to what we
3 now about how we learn. While there are many examples, most
4 recently and accurately, the new fire marshal curriculum was
5 ruled out as a virtual program, and the students were all
6 successful in completion. However, their course time prior
7 to certifying by testing varied from 29 to 67 hours.

8 Certainly, there are plenty of students who will
9 benefit from and take advantage of in-class opportunities.
10 In fact, most courses are designed to be delivered in just
11 that way. However, archaically requiring all the classes,
12 all the time is counterproductive and unnecessary because we
13 know how a student learns varies with each student. There
14 are many students who learn faster and better by different
15 methods, and in all cases, a good instructor will properly
16 prepare each student based on that student's learning
17 styles. This is already provided for in the language of the
18 law, which in all cases requires successfully demonstrating
19 competency through written and practical testing to national
20 standards.

21 Regarding Rule 29.418, there is no doubt the fire
22 chiefs and public safety directors must be nothing less than
23 competent. However, there are many glaring counter-
24 indications to being listed in this rule, beginning with
25 there being no NFPA standards to measure these

1 classifications against. In addition, in most cases, they
2 already fall into one or more of the other classifications,
3 making it redundant. Then, and perhaps a larger issue, both
4 of these classifications are at the sole discretion and
5 responsibility of the local government entity to appoint.

6 Just as the law did not due, the rules should not
7 overreach into creating local government conflicts and the
8 potential liability implications of rendering a
9 municipality's selection as unqualified, especially when
10 these classifications have no national standard to measure
11 against, and the rules do not add any value to them other
12 than what -- other than what is already indicated in the
13 other classifications. Thank you.

14 MS. SEARLES: Matt Sahr.

15 MATTHEW SAHR

16 MR. SAHR: Hello, my name is Matthew Sahr,
17 M-a-t-t-h-e-w, last name, Sahr, S-a-h-r. I've been in the
18 Fire Service for 20 years. I am currently working for the
19 City of Eastpointe Fire Department. I am also a -- a
20 representative of the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters.
21 I am here today to speak in full support of the changes.

22 I think training is paramount for the Fire Service
23 and a firefighter, whether it be at a paid-on-call, or
24 volunteer department, or a career department; it should all
25 be held to the same standard, and to say anything less than

1 that would be detrimental to our trade as a whole and to the
2 residents that we represent. There is a lot of people on
3 here that are making their comments, and I respect all of
4 them, but it should be known that from my personal
5 perspective, training is paramount, and it should not be
6 discounted, whether you're career, paid-on-call, or
7 volunteer. Thank you for your time.

8 MS. SEARLES: Christopher Dean.

9 CHRISTOPHER DEAN

10 MR. DEAN: Hello. My name is Christopher Dean. I
11 am the fire chief for --

12 MS. SEARLES: Could you spell your name, please?

13 MR. DEAN: I'm sorry. C-h-r-i-s-t-o-p-h-e-r,
14 D-e-a-n. I am the fire chief for the Muskegon Heights Fire
15 Department in Muskegon, Michigan. I am also a member of
16 many of the boards that are represented, both state and
17 nationally, including being an executive board member of the
18 Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association. I want to
19 first start out by thanking the committee that helped
20 develop the rules. I believe that the committee that was
21 formed with Fire Service members, the rules created,
22 represent the needs of the Fire Service.

23 One of the rules, in particular, that catch my
24 attention is the need for continuing the education training.
25 It equivilates (sic) to approximately -- or basically one

1 hour a month, which is a -- not a significant amount of
2 time, and we should consider that when thinking whether the
3 need for continuing education training is necessary.

4 The other rule that there seems to be some
5 controversy is about the memo related to Pro Board. One of
6 the things with the memo related to Pro Board, the Fire
7 Marshal has done an excellent job on, is allowing for
8 that -- the training council curriculum and material to be
9 utilized as the Pro Board test.

10 This provides equity among the different
11 communities in obtaining that Pro Board certification,
12 allowing opportunity for those who may be in areas that do
13 not have a Pro Board testing center nearby to obtain that
14 and use that certification to advance their life and family,
15 maybe even move out of the state with that certification. I
16 worked in an intercity community where there is not a nearby
17 Pro Board testing site. That may create obstacles for
18 intercity individuals to obtain that Pro Board
19 certification. This also applies to rural areas. This
20 allows for people to be in one test, pay one fee, and obtain
21 that certification through Pro Board that they can further
22 enhance their career in life. Thank you.

23 MS. SEARLES: Jesse Marcotte.

24 JESSE MARCOTTE

25 MR. MARCOTTE: Hello. Jesse Marcotte, J-e-s-s-e,

1 M-a-r-c-o-t-t-e. Am I okay to proceed?

2 MS. SEARLES: Yes; yes.

3 MR. MARCOTTE: I rise today in support of the
4 proposed changes to the Fire Fighters Training Council rule
5 set. I am not here to represent a single organization or
6 interest, rather, the best interest of the Fire Service, as
7 well as the citizens that we serve. I have been fortunate
8 to see the Fire Service through many different lenses over
9 the last 23 years. I have served as a fire cadet,
10 paid-on-call firefighter, career firefighter, and for the
11 last ten years, a full-time training coordinator. During
12 this time, I've had the opportunity and privilege to work
13 with firefighters on a local, regional, state, and national
14 level. I also understand the needs of a municipality. I
15 have served as a member of city council for the last five
16 years, and currently serve as mayor pro tem.

17 Training and education are cornerstones of
18 community risk reduction. Firefighting is an ultra
19 hazardous, unavoidably dangerous occupation. Today's Fire
20 Service responds to a multitude of incidents, including
21 structure fires, water and ice rescues, motor vehicle
22 accidents, and EMS calls. The hazards we face continue to
23 evolve, which is why line-of-duty death rates are higher
24 than they were in the 1970's, despite the fact that there
25 are less fires, better equipment, and improved personal

1 protection equipment.

2 Modern construction, synthetic materials in
3 rapidly changing fire conditions have resulted in less time,
4 both through the Fire Service and civilians alike, to escape
5 a perilous situation. In 2020 alone, our state experienced
6 122 fire deaths. Tragically, we have lost over 350
7 civilians to fires in just the last three years. The fact
8 that there is currently no annual requirement to maintain
9 our initial certification is frankly unacceptable. Someone
10 who received their initial certification 30 years ago does
11 not have to attend a single hour of training or even belong
12 to a fire department to maintain their certification.

13 This would not be tolerated in any other industry;
14 not in law enforcement, not in EMS, not in nursing, and not
15 in teaching, just to name a few. We have not set the bar
16 high enough. Our annual training requirements are vague,
17 ambiguous, and completely open to interpretation. We have a
18 responsibility to hold our industry to a higher standard.
19 We owe it to ourselves, our peers, and our communities.

20 This proposed rule set provides every fire
21 department in our state with a roadmap of basic expectations
22 related to training and education that is desperately needed
23 to build a foundation of consistency. This is not a high
24 standard, to clarify; it is a minimum standard. ISO, as an
25 example, recommends over 200 hours of annual training per

1 member to receive full credit.

2 This rule set establishes a minimum of 12 hours of
3 annual training. That evolution of technology has increased
4 the reach of educators in the Fire Service. Traditional
5 barriers to accessing instructors and educational materials
6 no longer exist. Urban and suburban and rural fire
7 departments are able to share lessons from every corner of
8 our state's borders by leveraging technology and other
9 resources.

10 MS. KEOWN: Mr. Marcotte, your three minutes are
11 up.

12 MR. MARCOTTE: Being safe begins with being smart,
13 and our --

14 MS. SEARLES: Nicholas Vaught.

15 NICHOLAS VAUGHT

16 MR. VAUGHT: Hello. Nicholas Vaught,
17 N-i-c-h-o-l-a-s, V-a-u-g-h-t. I reside in Chippewa County
18 in the UP of Michigan, eastern Upper Peninsula, captain with
19 the Sault Ste. Marie Fire Department. Thank you all
20 community members for the work you put into this. I just
21 want to say that I support the rules right now. I think
22 it's a very good step in the right direction, and that
23 training is the foundation for safety. Thank you.

24 MS. SEARLES: K. Edmond.

25 KEVIN EDMOND

1 MR. EDMOND: Hi. Kevin Edmond from Sterling
2 Height Fire Department, fire chief; that's K-e-v-i-n,
3 E-d-m-o-n-d. As a chief officer working in three different
4 states, I think it's of utmost importance to pass this
5 legislation to establish the continuing education. I am
6 fully aware of all the different levels of training and
7 education, and fully support this passage. Thank you.

8 MS. SEARLES: Eric Thomas.

9 ERIC THOMAS

10 MR. THOMAS: Good afternoon -- well, yeah, it's
11 still morning. Good morning, all. Eric Thomas, E-r-i-c,
12 T-h-o-m-a-s. I am representing -- I'm with the Detroit
13 Metro Airport Firefighters, Local 731. I am -- sorry; kids.
14 I am also in full support of the rules change. I think that
15 we should move forward. As being also a trained coordinator
16 for the State of Michigan, and also actively teaching in the
17 college, I think that this is very important.

18 I know that in the Fire Service, we always have
19 been inhibited, and also hard to swallow change, as brought
20 up earlier, and also advancement in our careers. One thing
21 important about a career is that there is always things
22 moving forward and that we should have continuing education
23 as far as doing our jobs, especially with the
24 ultra-hazardous things that we have to do. In that point
25 being, seeing that how the Fire Service is moving along in a

1 rapid way, as far as new technology and new things, it is
2 very important that we have an education that will --
3 continuing education, as far as training our firefighters
4 currently, older and newer ones, so that they can stay up to
5 date; one, so that we can be safe.

6 Yes, NFPA does state minimum standards for us, but
7 we could always have those minimum standards and exceed
8 those standards, too, to better our firefighters so we don't
9 have a lot of line-of-duty deaths. With that being said, I
10 think that we should move forward and continue on with
11 this vote, and I am in full support of it.

12 MS. SEARLES: Heim.

13 MR. HEIM: Hello?

14 MS. SEARLES: Yeah.

15 MR. HEIM: Can you hear me?

16 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

17 STEVE HEIM

18 MR. HEIM: Hi. So it's Steve Heim, H-e-i-m, is my
19 last name. Thank you for having me, and thank you for the
20 committee for all the hard work that you've put in. Like I
21 said, I'm Steven Heim. I'm a firefighter for the City of
22 Lincoln Park. I'm a lieutenant. I've been in the Fire
23 Service going on 30 years. I serve in various affiliations
24 throughout the state, including as a district vice president
25 for the Michigan Professional Fire Fighters Union

1 representing Wayne, Monroe, and Washtenaw County and the
2 1100 firefighters there. I chair the Michigan Professional
3 Fire Fighters Union health and safety committee. I rise in
4 support of the rules as proposed.

5 I believe the rules establish a floor for
6 training, that they are not excessive, that they are just a
7 minimum standard, and that those competencies will meet the
8 requirements of MIOSHA as it currently stands for all
9 employees in the state, irregardless of affiliation, whether
10 you're full time, or paid, or volunteer. Those standards
11 are the same, the concerns are the same, the risks are there
12 for all of us. The standard is written in a way that I
13 think recognizes a fair standard that could be applied
14 across the entire state.

15 I believe it's reasonable that the compromises
16 that have been made have been done with the best intentions
17 for the Fire Service, and that these rules are going to
18 provide a safe environment for all of us. I think the top
19 priority in the state needs to be making sure that the
20 firefighters are trained to a level that they are capable of
21 surviving and living a long life in the safest manner
22 possible. For recruitment and retention, the priority
23 should be that they are able to work and do this in a
24 successful way, and go home to their families, and be able
25 to flourish. This -- the rules and the standards have to be

1 applied in a way that will make that possible. It is a
2 little bit of a challenge for some folks, but the 12 hours a
3 year is a minimum and something can clearly be done and
4 needs to be done in a way that manage the risks that are
5 associated with this job. It has to be done in a way that's
6 safe for everyone so that we can all go home.

7 Like I said, I rise in support of the rules as
8 proposed, and I think you for you time.

9 MS. SEARLES: Chris Krotche.

10 MR. KROTCHÉ: Good?

11 MS. SEARLES: Yeah.

12 CHRIS KROTCHÉ

13 MR. KROTCHÉ: Hi. My name is Chris Krotche,
14 C-h-r-i-s, K-r-o-t-c-h-e. I am a retired battalion chief
15 with 33 years of service, and I am currently the fire chief
16 of Armada Township. I am speaking on my own behalf, and I
17 rise in support of all the changes, and I would also like to
18 thank the committee members.

19 I have the unique situation that I worked on both
20 sides of the fire department, both in a career department
21 and in a combination department, and I can undoubtedly say
22 that I believe this training is important. It is the
23 minimum. With a combination department, we have a low
24 volume of calls, low frequency, so that's why we believe
25 this is imperative, this minimum training is required.

1 We -- at our department, we (inaudible) because we do see
2 the value of it.

3 I also believe that when it comes to the fire
4 chiefs that we should have a level of training with leading
5 such a department. I rise in support. I thank you for your
6 time, and that's all. Thank you.

7 MS. SEARLES: Muskegon fire instructors.

8 MARK CLEVELAND

9 MR. CLEVELAND: Mark Cleveland, M-a-r-k,
10 C-l-e-v-e-l-a-n-d. I am here today representing Egelston
11 Township, the Muskegon Area fire chief, and the Michigan
12 Association of Fire Chiefs. The set rule 29.404, number 5,
13 is the belief of many that this should be deleted in its
14 entirety. An MOU does not belong within the rules, nor the
15 law. It should live outside of that. As such, we believe
16 that should be replaced with,

17 "The Bureau shall recognize and offer reciprocity
18 to any individual holding or obtaining a certification
19 from a nationally recognized, accredited organization
20 that meets the NFPA standard at the time of issue."

21 Replacing the overcomplicated and inefficient MOU
22 system with what is -- what I just described would resolve
23 the issue, and if an MOU is necessary, it should live
24 outside the law and rules.

25 We are further concerned that the require on

1 certain level a certification -- for example, fire chief or
2 fire officer -- is overreaching of the law. There is not
3 any place within Public Act 291 that mandates certification
4 levels except for Firefighter I and Firefighter II.
5 Firefighter I is required for paid-on-call or volunteer
6 firefighters, and Firefighter II is required for all career
7 firefighters. This also identifies the difference that many
8 have said there is no difference within the state, and there
9 shouldn't be, but within the rules and the law, we have
10 already identified a difference in training standards based
11 on full time or paid-on-call volunteer. Rule 29.418 states,
12 "An individual who is a firefighter of a
13 recognized fire department or public safety department,
14 who currently holds council certification, regardless
15 of his or her rank, responsibilities, or
16 certifications, shall obtain" -- 12 hours of continuing
17 education.

18 We are proposing that this state "continuing education
19 annually, in an amount certified as sufficient to meet
20 MIOSHA."

21 In Public Act 291, we're required to meet MIOSHA
22 general industry standards. They do call for minimum -- or
23 continuing education specific to and commensurate to the
24 duties they are expected to perform. This, in fact, could
25 set a department up for failure if they think 12 hours is

1 the minimum number of hours that they need to do to be
2 compliant. If an incident or an investigation were to
3 occur, the department could state, "We met -- we met the
4 annual hours set forth by the MFFTC," but MIOSHA determines
5 that to be inadequate. Now you've set up two different
6 regulatory standards by two different agencies. This
7 measurement tool is arbitrary and inappropriate, and
8 specific hours on recommended training without a source for
9 justification --

10 MS. KEOWN: Mr. Cleveland, your three minutes are
11 up.

12 MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you.

13 MS. SEARLES: Jim Daveluy.

14 JIM DAVELUY

15 MR. DAVELUY: Jim Daveluy, J-i-m, D-a-v-e-l-u-y.
16 I live in Midland County. I'm a City of Midland
17 firefighter, and I want to say I support these changes.
18 When I came back to Michigan from Tennessee in 2014, I had
19 to apply for my paramedic license back. I had to show that
20 I had been working as a paramedic and completed continued
21 education as a paramedic, but my fire certs were good
22 regardless of whether I had been on a fire truck, touched a
23 hose, or swung an axe.

24 It's time for us to have continuing education in
25 the Fire Service. It's a dangerous occupation, and fires

1 don't care if you're a volunteer or a career. So I rise in
2 support. Thank you for your time.

3 MS. SEARLES: Shawn Allen.

4 SHAWN ALLEN

5 MR. ALLEN: Good Morning, everyone. Shawn Allen,
6 S-h-a-w-n, A-l-l-e-n. I'm a fire marshal for the City of
7 Sterling Heights. Presently, I hold certificates as a
8 Firefighter I and II; I'm a fire inspector, a fire
9 investigator, fire instructor. I'm with the technical
10 rescue team for the City of Sterling Heights, the County and
11 Michigan Task Force 1. I'm also a HAZMAT technician.

12 So for myself, I would be required to have quite a
13 bit of continuing education. I am speaking in support of
14 the requirements on the Public Act 291. I believe all the
15 requirements as written are obtainable, they are reasonable,
16 the act should be adopted and moved forward. Thank you.

17 MS. SEARLES: Kevin Retzloff.

18 KEVIN RETZLOFF

19 MR. RETZLOFF: Hi. Kevin Retzloff, K-e-v-i-n,
20 R-e-t-z-l-o-f-f. I am with the Midland Fire Department.
21 I'm here on my own to just to speak of my support for the
22 rule changes as they are proposed. Thank you.

23 MS. SEARLES: Mike Vogt.

24 MIKE VOGT

25 MR. VOGT: Sorry about that. I had to un-mute.

1 Mike Vogt, M-i-k-e, last name is, V-o-g-t. I'm the
2 assistant fire chief and fire marshal for the City of Burton
3 Fire Department. I'm here representing myself as a fire
4 service professional --

5 MS. SEARLES: Oh, Mike, you're back on -- you're
6 on mute, Mike.

7 MR. VOGT: All right. Sorry about that. The
8 proposed rules, I am in full favor of the letter that was
9 sent out by the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs with the
10 proposed recommended changes to the rules that
11 were (inaudible) more my concern with continuing education
12 isn't so much of the education amount, it's the enforcement
13 of that. I just see that a firefighter not meeting this
14 obligation, the enforcement powers of the state is going to
15 fall back on the local municipality, and I just see that
16 causing a significant hardship, again, not on the actual
17 firefighter but on the municipality itself. Thank you.

18 MS. SEARLES: Liam Karroll. You're on mute, Liam.

19 MR. KARROLL: Thank you. Can you hear me now?

20 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

21 LIAM KARROLL

22 MR. KARROLL: Thank you. Liam Karroll, L-i-a-m,
23 K-a-r-r-o-l-l. I rise in full support of the rules as
24 presented. I am a retired Michigan fire chief, an
25 instructor-at-large, a program coordinator at a

1 college-based regional training center in the State of
2 Michigan, and an adjunct professor.

3 I believe that allowing people to have a
4 certificate to prove their ability goes well beyond just the
5 piece of paper. Possession of a certificate is not enough.
6 Education is a totality of experiences. As we expect our
7 doctors and our lawyers to have the same totality of
8 experience, we should expect our firefighters to have the
9 same. It's not just a matter of taking a test or
10 challenging an exam. NFPA JPR documentation needs to occur.
11 One of the sidebars to this is that in the educational
12 arena, to offer credit hours towards a degree based upon
13 prior life experiences or the certificates that we hold
14 requires that they have that totality of education. It's
15 not just a certificate. The Higher Learning Commission,
16 which regulates colleges, requires it.

17 To not have a full course behind the student that
18 you're giving credit hours and simply having an examination
19 could put the regional -- college-based regional training
20 centers in harms way with the Higher Learning Commission.
21 The accreditation agencies that are out there I believe will
22 also stand against the idea of challenging for
23 certification, wanting you to take full course work. I
24 believe that having the ability to challenge or just simply
25 having a certificate for our needs will also put us in a

1 difficult spot for reciprocity from state to state; not
2 agency to agency, but state to state.

3 For instance, the State of Ohio requires that we
4 specify for reciprocity the number of medics that are tied
5 to each NFPA and JPR. A certificate does not prove that,
6 regardless what other agencies may believe. I fear that
7 certification mills will occur. I can vouch for the fact
8 that many people can teach to certification level, and teach
9 the necessary needs for the examination. That does not mean
10 that you have a fully trained firefighter before you. You
11 have somebody who is coached up to speed, and I fear
12 those mills. Colleges and those who do testing routinely
13 could easily become those mills. That it pays to pass
14 certification process for reciprocity does not hold merit.

15 I believe that continued education as it's
16 presented is a floor, not a ceiling. We should look to
17 improve upon that. I fully support continuing education.
18 The industry changes rapidly. This will require that we
19 stay abreast and will give the mechanism to do so.

20 MS. KEOWN: Mr. Karroll, your three minutes is up.

21 MR. KARROLL: Thank you for your time.

22 MS. SEARLES: John Polzin.

23 MR. POLZIN: Hello?

24 MS. SEARLES: Yes. If you would state your name
25 and spell it, please, and if you're representing an

1 organization.

2 JOHN POLZIN

3 MR. POLZIN: Yes. My name is John Polzin,
4 J-o-h-n, P-o-l-z-i-n. I'm with the City of Midland Fire
5 Department, and I would just like to state that I am in full
6 support of the changes as written. Thank you very much.

7 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Chris Lince.

8 CHRIS LINCE

9 MR. LINCE: Chris Lince, C-h-r-i-s, L-i-n-c-e,
10 lieutenant with the City of Midland Fire Department, here on
11 my own behalf. I've been in the Fire Service for 30 years,
12 and it's time that we move ahead. These requirements are
13 minimums and well within obtainable reach. I fully support
14 these rules. Thank you.

15 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. We will go to the phone
16 lines now. I'll read the last four digits, and then I'll
17 ask you if you have any comments or not. 0075.

18 UNKNOWN 0075: No comment.

19 MS. SEARLES: Who am I -- who is speaking?

20 (No verbal response)

21 MS. SEARLES: 9162.

22 MR. BOURGEOIS: Hello?

23 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

24 DOUG BOURGEOIS

25 MR. BOURGEOIS: Hi. Doug Bourgeois, Beaver Creek

1 Fire Department. I would like to say I'm not full
2 support --

3 MS. SEARLES: And could you spell your name,
4 please? Could you spell your name please? Thank you.

5 MR. BOURGEOIS: Yes. Doug, D-o-u-g, last name,
6 Bourgeois, B-, as in boy, o-u-r-g-e-o-i-s. I am in support
7 of the rules as changed, although many people brought some
8 great points, and probably need to be looked at maybe in the
9 future, but moving forward, I believe it would be awesome
10 for the Fire Service. Thank you very much. Everyone stay
11 safe out there.

12 MS. SEARLES: 9162, if you would un-mute.

13 (No verbal response)

14 MS. SEARLES: Okay. I'll go to the next one.
15 0286, if you would un-mute.

16 MR. SCOTT: Yes. Can you hear --

17 MS. SEARLES: Yes. Give us your name, and
18 organization you're representing, and spelling your name.

19 ROB SCOTT

20 MR. SCOTT: Yes. Rob, R-o-b, Scott, S-c-o-t-t.
21 I'm out of Wayne County, Michigan Professional Firefighters
22 for the last 22 years, currently a firefighter in the City
23 of Southfield. I rise in support of these rule changes, and
24 we do a job that could possibly killed us. It has killed
25 several firefighters.

1 My wife is a school teacher of 19 years. She has
2 to do continuing education every year. Also, we have to do
3 continuing education with our medical licenses, either for
4 your basic EMT or paramedic. Nurses have to do continuing
5 education. This is long overdue and needs to be passed.
6 Thank you for your time.

7 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. 2701; 2701.

8 (No verbal response)

9 MS. SEARLES: 0286, if you would un-mute.

10 (No verbal response)

11 MS. SEARLES: 3213, if you would un-mute.

12 (No verbal response)

13 MS. SEARLES: 5333, if you would un-mute.

14 (No verbal response)

15 MS. SEARLES: 3213, did you have something to say?

16 MR. STEEBY: No comment.

17 MS. SEARLES: All right. Could you give your
18 name?

19 ANDY STEEBY

20 MR. STEEBY: Andy, A-n-d-y, Steeby,
21 S-t-e-e-b-, as in boy, y; Wayne County Community College
22 District, ROTC course manager.

23 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. 7028.

24 (No verbal response)

25 MS. SEARLES: It looks like we have some others

1 members. In fact, it should help to form the very
2 foundation of a positive fire service organizational
3 culture. The Michigan Fire Service needs to transform from
4 a trade to a profession. A fire service leadership must set
5 policies, procedures, and standards that include language
6 supporting the portability of our training and education for
7 the benefits of next generation firefighters.

8 As for continuing education -- degradation is a
9 real concern in our profession. Just because you were
10 certified ten years ago does not mean you are still
11 competent in doing the job today. This question has become
12 important in states such as Michigan that currently do not
13 require re-certification or continuing education.
14 Unfortunately, the Michigan Fire Service has lagged behind
15 in meeting national standards. Most of us focus on the
16 present and don't ask "what if" type of questions for the
17 future, and that's why the Michigan Fire Service has lagged
18 behind. We need to move forward with the approval of these
19 rules to put the Michigan Fire Service on equal footing with
20 the remaining of the American Fire Service. There is a
21 beloved phrase in the fire service: "200 years of tradition
22 unimpeded by progress." I think the majority of the
23 Michigan Fire Service has recognized it's time to bring us
24 into the 21st Century. Thank you.

25 MS. SEARLES: Joe Grutza.

1 JOE GRUTZA

2 MR. GRUTZA: Hello. My name is Joe Grutza,
3 spelled, J-o-e, G-r-u-t-z-a. I am a retired fire fighter
4 from Fenton. I stand in support of the rules as written.
5 Also, I want to thank all the members of the Michigan Fire
6 Fighters Training Council, the state fire marshal, and all
7 the fire service that attended these meetings. I know, from
8 the past, the amount of work that was put in, and I'm really
9 impressed with the results here.

10 Again, I stand in support of the rules as written.
11 I think we need to all come together and make sure that we
12 can help every member of the Fire Service in our state meet
13 these requirements as written. Thank you.

14 MS. SEARLES: C. Pichan.

15 MR. PICHAN: Hello, ma'am. Am I coming through?

16 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

17 CHARLES PICHAN

18 MR. PICHAN: Captain Charles Pichan of the Detroit
19 Fire Department Regional Training Center, C-h-a-r-l-e-s,
20 P-i-c-h-a-n. Although no document can be perfectly written,
21 this is definitely a step in the right direction, and I am
22 in full support of moving forward. Thank you for your time
23 and efforts.

24 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Mike Harper.

25 MIKE HARPER

1 MS. SEARLES: Yes.

2 CHRIS COUGHLIN

3 MR. COUGHLIN: Okay. Chris Coughlin, C-h-r-i-s,
4 C-o-u-g-h-l-i-n. I am the chief of the City of Midland Fire
5 Department, and I was a representative of the Michigan
6 Association of Fire Chiefs during the drafting of the
7 changes to Public Act 291. One of the things that we took
8 into consideration during that drafting was the MIOSHA Part
9 74 requirements, that firefighters be trained commensurate
10 with the duties they are expected to perform.

11 I think that we may have an issue here in that
12 requiring continuing ed and specific hours of continuing
13 ed for firefighters in different locations is not
14 necessarily going to be accepted by MIOSHA. We have nothing
15 to indicate that MIOSHA would accept any of these
16 requirements that are in -- in this rule set, and I think
17 that should be a concern. I think it should go back and
18 probably be looked at a little closer, and I think a
19 conversation needs to occur between rule makers and MIOSHA
20 before we get into this any deeper than we currently are.

21 The other thing I would like to touch on is, the
22 intent was to make it easier for volunteer firefighters,
23 career firefighters, on-call firefighters to have
24 reciprocity in the State of Michigan. I think, if anything,
25 we've kind of muddied the waters on that. We were looking

1 for a mechanism to recognize NFPA-based education
2 universally, and what we're seeing is an MOU for every
3 class, and that was not the intent, and I disagree with this
4 wholeheartedly. I think we're on the right track, but I
5 think we've -- we need to go back and revisit this. And
6 that's my peace. Thank you.

7 MS. SEARLES: Justin Holmes. We can't hear you,
8 Justin. Justin, do you want to try again?

9 (No verbal response)

10 MS. SEARLES: Okay. Well, if we don't have
11 anybody else that wishes to speak at this time, we'll take a
12 ten-minute recess. But I also want to remind you, if you
13 are on the video, if you want to participate, you click on
14 the "participant" down at the bottom, and then a screen will
15 come up, and you will chose the option to "raise your hand."
16 So we will be back at 12:19.

17 (Off the record)

18 MS. SEARLES: We both had an issue with using the
19 "raise the hand" function. So if you want to talk, you can
20 turn on your camera and raise your hand, and I'll go down
21 the list, and call on you. I am not seeing any -- oh, here
22 we've got one. Brother Love.

23 MR. LOVE: Hello?

24 MS. SEARLES: If you would state your name, and
25 spell your name, and what organization you're representing?

1 CHRISTOPHER LOVE

2 MR. LOVE: Hello. My name is Christopher Love. I
3 work with the Battle Creek Fire Department. I'm a captain,
4 and I've been on the department, it will be 29 years in May.
5 And I am just speaking in support of the rule -- proposed
6 rule changes.

7 I feel it's very important in our line of work
8 that we have updating of training and that training is a
9 very key component of this, and it's, you know, not
10 unreasonable at all for us to expect to have continuing ed
11 credits just like, you know, we do for medical or any other
12 profession that has new information and data coming in. So
13 I rise in support of this. I live in Calhoun County in
14 Battle Creek, Michigan.

15 MS. SEARLES: Could I have you spell your name
16 also, please?

17 MR. LOVE: Yes, C-h-r-i-s-t-o-p-h-e-r, L-o-v-e.

18 MS. SEARLES: Thank you.

19 MR. LOVE: Thank you.

20 MS. SEARLES: Anthony Watts.

21 ANTHONY WATTS

22 MR. WATTS: Good afternoon. My name is, Anthony
23 Watts, A-n-t-h-o-n-y, W-a-t-t-s. I'm a lieutenant with the
24 Detroit Fire Department Training Division, and I speak in
25 support of this document. Thank you.

1 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Courtland Chief.

2 STEVE MOJZUK

3 MR. MOJZUK: Yes. Steve Mojzuk, S-t-e-v-e,
4 M-o-j-z-u-k, Courtland Township fire chief, and I am
5 speaking on my own behalf. And I approve of the new rule
6 change. I would like to see more volunteer, smaller
7 departments on here speaking their mind, but since they're
8 not here, I -- I do support the training -- the continuing
9 ed training as -- as it's written, because I think we do
10 need it. I just wish more small departments would speak out
11 about it. And that's all I've got to say. Thank you.

12 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Jeff Frieden- --
13 Friedenstab.

14 JEFF FRIEDENSTAB

15 MR. FRIEDENSTAB: Yes, my name is Jeff
16 Friedenstab; it's, J-e-f-f, F-r-i-e-d-e-n-s-t-a-b. I'm with
17 the Iron Mountain Fire Department, Dickinson County, up here
18 in the Upper Peninsula. I am for moving forward with these,
19 but I also would like the reciprocity area to be looked at
20 again. Thank you for your time.

21 MS. SEARLES: Lieutenant Jamal Mickles.

22 JAMAL MICKLES

23 MR. MICKLES: Good afternoon. Lieutenant Jamal
24 Mickles with the Detroit Fire Department Training Division.
25 And I --

1 MS. SEARLES: Could you spell your name, please?

2 MR. MICKLES: J-a-m-a-l, last name, M-i-c-k-l-e-s.

3 As a highly involved instructor with the State of Michigan,
4 I speak in support of this document. It is a flawed
5 document, and I'm looking forward to being made aware and
6 being involved in the process of adapting some of the
7 changes to some of the concerns that have been presented
8 today. However, I do believe it's time to -- for Michigan
9 to come into the 21st Century in the fire service, and this
10 will bring us out of the 60's, and start to move more toward
11 the future of the fire service as we become truly the
12 profession that we should be. Thank you.

13 MS. SEARLES: Jeffrey Forbes.

14 JEFFREY FORBES

15 MR. FORBES: Good afternoon. My name is Jeffrey
16 Forbes, that is, J-e-f-f-r-e-y, Forbes, F-o-r-b-e-s. I am a
17 EMS captain with the Detroit Fire Department Training
18 Center. I speak in support of this document. We, as a
19 whole and as a state, need to continue to move the fire
20 service to the future, and keep moving us forward as a
21 professional -- as working in a professional atmosphere, we
22 need to keep moving us forward and keep all of our training
23 at top notch, similar to what they have done with EMS over
24 the years. Again, I do speak in support of this document.

25 MS. SEARLES: Robert Massey.

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ROBERT MASSEY

MR. MASSEY: Good morning. My name is Robert Massey, R-o-b-e-r-t, M-a-s-s-e-y. And I am in full -- I'm a lieutenant at the Detroit Regional Training Center, and I am in full support about this document.

MS. SEARLES: Is there anybody else that would like to speak? If you would turn your camera on, and raise your hand if you're having an issue. Captain -- Captain Seal, North Oakland County Fire.

TIMOTHY SEAL

MR. SEAL: Good afternoon, everybody. Captain Timothy Seal, T-i-m-o-t-h-y, S-e-a-l. I am speaking on my own behalf. At this point, I'm not going to rise for or against the document on the list here. I do have some concerns and may be offering experience. While I do believe as a training officer in my department and having had the privilege of serving both as a full-time MPFFU and IAFF firefighter and as a union president at one time, and now as a full-time captain and recruitment and retraining officer in a paid on-call environment, I agree that training is of vital importance.

And I understand that theory -- well -- however, what I am finding in a paid-on-call environment, is as we continue to increase the training requirement with paid-on-call individuals, our recruitment and retention is already

1 somewhat destroyed and is getting further hampered by
2 increasing training requirements. I agree that it is
3 needed. I don't know what the correct vehicle for
4 enforcement is and how some smaller departments can fund the
5 required training. People are busy as it is, as we know,
6 with everything going on. I wish I had the answer, but I
7 don't. But I know it does affect the recruitment and
8 retention.

9 I know that there is talk about this potentially
10 being a State oversight with a unfunded mandate. We're all
11 aware of how that works with smaller budgets. I do believe,
12 overall, we are on track. It is a good document. I don't
13 know that those concerns are worth squashing the whole
14 document, and I also commend the individuals who have all
15 done the rule changes, because I know they spent countless
16 hours in changing those rules.

17 I do think that we could brush up the reciprocity
18 a little bit. The State had been all over the place for
19 years, as to what training was and wasn't accepted, and I
20 think if they've got and met the requirements, they should
21 receive the reciprocity, whether they were through RAFT or
22 another professional organization, without too much
23 leg-work. I think everybody should credit their time in
24 training.

25 That is all. I yield the rest of my time. I hope

1 everybody stays safe and have a good afternoon.

2 MS. SEARLES: Robert Seal -- or Smith. Excuse me.
3 Robert Smith.

4 ROBERT SMITH

5 MR. SMITH: Yes, thank you. Robert Smith,
6 R-o-b-e-r-t, S-m-i-t-h. I am the fire chief in the Dexter
7 Area Fire Department with over 40 years in the Fire Service.
8 I speak in opposition to this document as written. I
9 believe in general is it a good document or a good
10 philosophy. But my concern, I agree with my colleagues
11 regarding reciprocity and continuing education. But the
12 document itself, I find several issues, is first, all of
13 these certifications in this document require membership in
14 a fire department, when in fact, you can get NFPA
15 certification or other certifications without being a member
16 of a fire department in the state of Michigan. And this
17 continues in to the disciplinary process, which is unclear,
18 as to whether that applies simply to instructors or across
19 the board for various certifications. In one area, the
20 council can strip an individual of their certifications for
21 the State of Michigan, but that doesn't necessarily strip
22 them of their NFPA certification or Pro Board certification,
23 so do we get in a round-robin of stripping of certification
24 in the State of Michigan only to reapply through
25 reciprocity. I see some concerns there with the way the

1 document is written and laid out. And I thank you for
2 allowing me to speak today.

3 MS. SEARLES: Brian Rayle.

4 BRIAN RAYLE

5 MR. RAYLE: Hi. My name is Brian Rayle,
6 B-r-i-a-n, R-a-y-l-e. I am instructor with Detroit Fire
7 Department Regional Training Center. I do have experience
8 in the volunteer, paid-on-call, full-time sector, including
9 steel mill firefighting. I wholeheartedly agree with all
10 the updates, yes. Thank you for your time.

11 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. Captain Edwards.

12 JAMES EDWARDS

13 MR. EDWARDS: Good afternoon -- or good morning to
14 everyone. My name is James Edwards, J-a-m-e-s, E-d-w-a-r-d-
15 s. I am a captain at the Detroit Fire Regional Training
16 Center. We are in full support of this. We recognize this
17 as being a first step for us to raise the bar for not only
18 training that we will be able to provide, but also training
19 for ourselves. We always challenge our students. We always
20 let them know that this is an evolving career choice, so we
21 have to lead by example. So this is a very strong first
22 step for us, and I congratulate everyone that worked on this
23 and that will continue to improve this document.

24 MS. SEARLES: Stacy Taylor.

25 STACY TAYLOR

1 MR. TAYLOR: Hi. I'm lieutenant Stacy Taylor from
2 the Detroit Fire Department Regional Training Center.

3 MS. SEARLES: Can you spell your name, please?

4 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, S-t-a-c-y, T-a-y-l-o-r. And I
5 am in full support of the document. Thank you.

6 MS. SEARLES: Thank you. I'm going to check to
7 see if anybody has their hand raised, if they would like to
8 be called on. Also, if you are unable to speak, or would
9 still like to send comments, that can go to: LARA,
10 L-A-R-A, hyphen, BFS@michigan.gov. Does anyone else wish to
11 comment on the rules? Does anybody else wish to comment on
12 the rules at this time? Does anybody else wish to comment
13 on the rules at this time? We have one more. Bigger.

14 MR. BIGGER: Hi. This Don Bigger. I am president
15 of the --

16 MS. SEARLES: Don, if you could spell your name,
17 please?

18 DONALD BIGGER

19 MR. BIGGER: Yes, Donald, D-o-n-a-l-d, Bigger,
20 B-, as in boy, i-g-g-e-r. I am currently the president of
21 the Michigan Fire Service Instructors Association and
22 retired from the Plainfield Fire Department after 34 years
23 of a combination department with full time and paid-on-call.
24 I also have been involved with the coalition for many years,
25 and was part of the 291 re-write. And I would like to say

1 we support the document as written. There was a lot of
2 time; there was a lot of input. The people who have
3 concerns now also had representatives and had input as a
4 democratic process, and it was voted on and passed.

5 A couple -- address a couple comments that were
6 made about the difference between full time and part time.
7 We run an inspectors conference every year in Traverse City,
8 and a lot of the comments that we get from paid-on-call fire
9 departments or volunteer fire departments -- which I was
10 glad to see many in the Upper had called, and with comments
11 on some of the part time, like (inaudible) -- is that the
12 departments that aren't full time have requested and made a
13 lot of comments at the inspectors conference that we need to
14 set a standard that everybody went by. By not having a
15 standard that all departments are by -- they had problems
16 getting it funded at the local departments. If it wasn't
17 funded, then they didn't have the trainings. So they always
18 encouraged us, at the instructors, to -- whenever we worked
19 on the document, to make sure it was inclusive to everybody,
20 not -- not a difference, not a difference between career and
21 volunteers.

22 So the continuing ed part is what they talked
23 about a lot. If it's not a requirement, that the state
24 isn't requirement -- requiring it like they do EMS,
25 teachers, police officers, then the locals, they don't fund

1 it, and then it's not possible.

2 So in closing, for my years around and listening
3 to everybody, we like the way it's written, and we support
4 it the way it's written. Thank you.

5 MS. SEARLES: Does anybody else wish to comment on
6 the rules? I'll go through it again and check for any hands
7 up. If you are unable to use the hand function, if you
8 would turn your camera on and raise your hand. Does anyone
9 else wish to comment on the rules? One more time, does
10 anybody else wish to comment on the rules?

11 If there is no further comments at this time, I
12 hereby declare the hearing closed. The record will remain
13 open until 5:00 p.m. today for any other comments you may
14 wish to share about the proposed rules. Again, you can
15 email comments to: LARA-BFS@michigan.gov, and thanks for
16 attending.

17 (Exhibits 1 and 2 marked)

18 (Hearing concluded at 12:37 p.m.)

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