



UNION FIRE DISTRICT OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN
131 ASA POND ROAD
SOUTH KINGSTOWN, RI 02879



TEL (401) 789-8354

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March 5, 2024

Representative Stephen M. Casey
House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Subject: Support for House Bill 7838

Dear Chairman Casey,

As a member of the Union Fire District of South Kingstown (UFD) for the past twenty-five years, I request your support of the proposed legislation concerning abatement and/or exemptions of UFD taxes for qualified UFD members with the UFD Charter Amendment. The UFD is comprised primarily of volunteers who risk everything including their lives to protect and serve their fellow community members and their property for little or no financial reward. As a firefighter, a line officer and now a UFD Warden, I have seen the value of these volunteers and I urge you to support this Charter change. This abatement and/or exemption would be an added retention tool to keep volunteers continuing to serve and a financial relief for those who receive it. Volunteerism is down all over this country, and we need your help to keep it going.

Please consider supporting the passage of House Bill 7838 concerning tax abatement for UFD members.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark A. Nelson".

Mark A. Nelson
Board of Wardens (Chairman)
Union Fire District of South Kingstown

Cc: Representative Tanzi
Representative Fogarty
Representative McEntee
File

"Safety Always"



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Representative Stephen M. Casey
Chairperson
House Committee on Municipal Government & Housing
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Representative Casey,

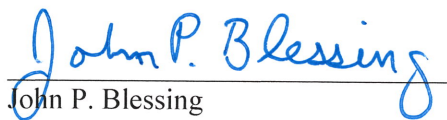
I strongly support the passage for House Bill 7838 and which act would amend the charter of the Union Fire District of South Kingstown (UFD) by renaming "Reserve for Capital Expenditures" to "Capital Projects Fund" and would allow the Board of Wardens to grant tax exemption to qualified current volunteer firefighters, retired volunteer firefighters and their surviving spouses.

The UFD is a quasi-municipal entity and has been providing fire protection services since 1883. The UFD relies on volunteer firefighters to respond to various calls for service throughout the UFD, as well as provides mutual aid to neighboring communities when requested. A top priority for the UFD is to remain a volunteer fire district while providing top notch fire protection services.

The UFD has worked tirelessly on recruitment and retention efforts during recent years with the goal to remain a volunteer fire service organization into future years. It is my belief that House Bill 7838 will help to support that goal by authorizing the UFD Board of Wardens to grant property tax exemption and or property tax abatement for qualified volunteer firefighters, retired volunteer firefighters and their surviving spouses.

Your support of House Bill 7838 would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



John P. Blessing
Administrator
Union Fire District of South Kingstown

Cc: Board of Wardens
Representative Tanzi
Representative Fogarty
Representative McEntee
File

"Safety Always"

Timothy F. Redmond
33 Woodman's Trail
Wakefield RI 02879
401-741-5515

March 5, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

This serves as a letter of support for House Bill 7838 and Senate Bill 2633 regarding changes to the Union Fire District of South Kingstown (UFD) Charter to allow for property tax exemptions and abatements for qualified volunteer members.

I have served the UFD for 45 years. Over the years I have seen firsthand that the number of volunteers has decreased. The culture of society today is that it is becoming increasingly difficult to not only recruit, but retain, volunteer firefighters.

Changing the UFD Charter to allow the governing body to adopt an ordinance regarding property tax exemption or abatement would be a key component in the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

I ask for your support for both House Bill 7838 and Senate Bill 2633.

Sincerely,

Timothy F Redmond

Timothy F Redmond