



Volunteer & Combination Officers Section of The International Association of Fire Chiefs

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September 29, 2011

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland
Security and Governmental Affairs
344 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

On behalf of the leaders of America's approximately 800,000 volunteer firefighters, the Board of Directors of the Volunteer and Combination Officers Section and I strongly endorse the nomination of Chief Ernest Mitchell to be the United States Fire Administrator. Chief Mitchell is well-qualified for this position, and America's volunteer fire chiefs urge the U.S. Senate to quickly confirm him.

Chief Mitchell has dedicated himself to the fire service for more than 35 years. During this time, he has played a multitude of roles, demonstrating superior leadership as well as acute technical skills.

His career began as an engineering aide at the Los Angeles County Fire Department drawing response maps and mapping wildland fires. He later became a firefighter with the City of Compton, California, followed by a long list of progressively more distinguished positions including: fire inspector/investigator, captain, training officer, fire marshal and battalion chief before becoming chief of the fire departments in Monrovia and Pasadena, California. His long and varied experiences have been widely recognized as exceptional and have been manifested in his selection for distinguished posts. He served as President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs in 2003 and 2004, on the editorial advisory board of *Fire Chief* magazine, and presided over several other fire service organizations, including the Los Angeles Area Fire Chiefs Association; the League of California Cities Fire Chiefs; and the Foothill Fire Chiefs.

Chief Mitchell truly and comprehensively understands the challenges facing all of America's fire departments: volunteer, career, and combination. From his years with the California fire service, he understands the importance of being prepared for all-hazards response and having a strong mutual aid system. At a federal level, he has worked with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) serving with the IAFC's National Response Plan Working Group; as an adjunct instructor for the National Fire Academy; and as a member of both the DHS' R-Tech User Group

and the DHS Science and Technology Advisory Committee. And finally, Chief Mitchell understands the problems facing the nation's municipal leaders based on his work as the Deputy City Manager of Monrovia and on the City of Compton's first strategic plan.

America's volunteer fire chiefs are proud to strongly endorse Chief Mitchell's nomination. We look forward to working with you to ensure his confirmation by the full Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy S. Wall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line striking through the middle of the name.

Fire Chief Timothy S. Wall
Chair, Volunteer & Combination Officers Section
International Association of Fire Chiefs