



**WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

March 24, 2022

Joel C. McCrea, President
Maryland State Firemen's Association
2130 Priest Bridge Drive #4
Crofton, Maryland 21114

Dear President McCrea:

The [Women Legislators of Maryland](#) are a bipartisan, bicameral body with 82 members, and the first caucus of women leaders founded in the United States. We appreciate your organization and members, who are critical to the safety of our communities. We write today to address the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) proposed name change.

On behalf of the women who answer the call to serve and the young women who aspire to serve in their communities, we echo the December 2021 request of Senators Kagan and Reilly to rename your organization to the Maryland State **Firefighters** Association. We were disappointed that you did not accept the invitation to speak at our March 9th meeting so that we could share our concerns.

To quote [your website](#), "The fire and EMS service is one of the most diverse and challenging vocations today. **It is this diversity that attracts most men and women to join our ranks.**" The "[Meet the Volunteers](#)" page tells the stories of 15 women volunteers, clearly highlighting the value and contributions of these courageous women.

As you know, Maryland has a rich history of women firefighters. Between 1910 and 1920, Silver Spring, Maryland was one of only two women's volunteer fire companies in the nation. We currently have three female Fire Chiefs representing Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Prince George's counties.

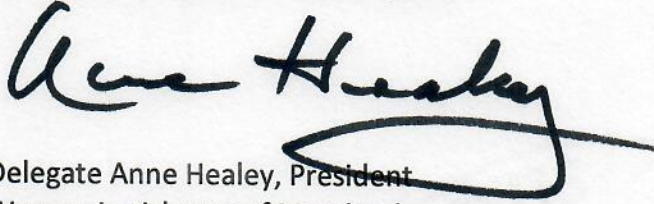
It's noteworthy that while other organizations have addressed the need for gender equity, MSFA continues to fall short. The Anne Arundel County Volunteer Firefighters Association; Baltimore County Fire Volunteer Fire Fighter's Association; Howard County Volunteer Firefighters Association; and the International Association of Fire Fighters have all taken the initiative to respect our women who save lives and property every day.

Maryland remains one of **only six states in the US** that has yet to change its name from *Firemen* to *Firefighters*. Words matter. Symbolism matters. Role modeling matters. The gender diversity in today's volunteer and career fire departments must be recognized appropriately.

In closing, the Women Legislators of Maryland Caucus requests that the Maryland State Firemen's Association takes action to change its name. As an organization that represents both men **and women** volunteers across the state, MSFA's name should reflect the diversity of its membership and its leadership. We await your reply to this letter no later than March 31st. We look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

The Women Legislators of Maryland

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Anne Healey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the word "Healey".

Delegate Anne Healey, President
Women Legislators of Maryland