



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Virginia Firefighters Applaud General Assembly Vote

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**April 22, 2026, Richmond, VA** -The Virginia General Assembly today rejected the substitute bill proposed by Gov. Abigail Spanberger on collective bargaining rights for public safety workers. The substitute bill would have eliminated nearly all worker protections, limited the scope of bargaining topics and delayed enactment until 2030. In addition, it would have severely impacted the eight localities that currently have collective bargaining agreements in place.

This action sends the original legislation back to her desk for approval.

“Today, the General Assembly stood strong for Virginia’s public sector workers. Rather than accept a watered-down version of collective bargaining that stripped rights away from workers, the original bill is being sent back for the Governor’s approval,” said Robert Bragg, President of the Virginia Professional Fire Fighters (VPFF). “The original bill was introduced, debated in committee and passed both chambers with input from Virginia workers. After this action today, we sincerely ask Gov. Spanberger to protect Virginia’s working class, and our 11,000 firefighters, and sign this bill into law.”

Virginia’s public sector workers have been advocating for comprehensive collective bargaining reform since the outright ban on collective bargaining was overturned in Virginia in 2020. While an important start, the legislation from 2020 only provided a local option and did not provide any statewide guidance on enactment. The current bill, proposed by Senator Scott Surovell (D-Fairfax) and Delegate Kathy Tran (D-Fairfax), included input from labor leaders across the Commonwealth and provides a strong framework for implementation.

The Virginia Governor now has 30 days to act on the original bill.

The Virginia Professional Fire Fighters is a labor organization of nearly 11,000 firefighters, emergency medical providers and 911 communications officers across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Established in 1955, the VPFF represents 68 local affiliates of the International Association of Fire Fighters.

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