



NEWS RELEASE

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Virginia Firefighters Statement on Collective Bargaining Veto

May 13, 2026, Richmond, VA -Today, the Virginia Governor turned her back on Virginia firefighters and public sector workers across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

With the Governor's veto of SB378/HB1263 on collective bargaining, she has chosen to side with the small anti-worker minority, not the pro-worker majority of her own political party.

"It is a sad day for all workers in Virginia. Since the very beginning of her campaign, we supported the Governor because of her past support of workers and her promise to correct the decades long issue of public sector collective bargaining. Her promises to us, and all workers, turned out to be hollow and nothing more than campaign rhetoric," said Robert L. Bragg III, President of the Virginia Professional Fire Fighters. *"The General Assembly, through hard work, negotiation and compromise, placed a good bill on her desk. A bill that would have made an enormous difference in the lives of over 500,000 blue-collar workers. But she chose to veto it."*

SB378 (Sen. Scott Surovell) and HB1263 (Del. Kathy Tran) sought to provide comprehensive collective bargaining to all public sector workers in Virginia. The bill would have provided workers the ability to negotiate with their employers on basic rights such as wages, benefits and working conditions. The bill also provided important guidelines and support systems to ensure fair application and enactment. The Governor had previously sought to water-down the legislation by substantially rewriting its components through a substitute bill. The substitute was rejected by the General Assembly on April 22 during a reconvened session.

Bragg further stated, *"Virginia's firefighters will continue running into danger, saving lives and making a difference every single day in this Commonwealth. Virginians trust their firefighters will show up when they are needed most. Unfortunately, now firefighters know they cannot trust their Governor to show up for them."*

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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.