



# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS®

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General President

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The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

On behalf of the nation's 305,000 professional fire fighters and emergency medical personnel, we urge you to oppose the nomination of Michael Dourson to be Assistant Administrator of EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. Michael Dourson's long career as a toxicologist paid by industry to work on the same chemicals he will be in charge of at EPA, including flame retardants, is a recipe for disaster for fire fighters.

The scientific evidence demonstrates fire fighters have higher incidences of cancer compared to other occupations, and that these cancers are specifically related to the job of fire-fighting. For example, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) found the chance of fire fighter lung cancer diagnosis or death and the chance of fire fighter leukemia death increased with time spent fighting fire and the number of fire runs, respectively.

In the course of duty, fire fighters are exposed to toxic chemicals including flame retardants applied to upholstered furniture and many other household products. In work paid by NAFRA, Dourson concluded that the flame retardant tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBPA)—an EPA work plan chemical—is not likely to be a reproductive or developmental toxicant. Numerous other studies indicate just the opposite. Dourson's consistent record of reaching conclusions not supported by other scientific experts including those in state and federal regulatory agencies raises serious concerns.

The IAFF is committed to protecting the health and safety of the public as well as its members. We need real facts about the safety of the chemicals our members come in contact with.

The IAFF is deeply concerned and is committed to protecting the health and safety of its members, and preventing toxic occupational exposures that put their health at significant risk. Michael Dourson's long record undermining efforts to shed light on the toxicity of flame retardants leaves us little doubt that he is the wrong man to lead EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. Again, we urge you to oppose his nomination.

Sincerely,

Harold A. Schaitberger  
General President