



May 20, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my unwavering support for the East Franklin Fire Department (EFFD), Station 27. I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and selflessness exhibited by the men and women who volunteer their time and risk their lives to ensure their community's safety. While many volunteer fire departments across the country are struggling to retain volunteer personnel to serve their communities, EFFD has become the blueprint for retention in the U.S. volunteer fire service. In 2016, a [doctoral study](#) was conducted to explore the strategies successful volunteer fire service leaders used to retain volunteers, and EFFD has openly identified itself as the focus of this study. EFFD's success in volunteer retention has served as a model for social change by providing volunteer fire service leaders across the country with the strategies to retain volunteer firefighters and contribute to a high-quality workforce.

The members and chief officers of EFFD have been extremely engaged in promoting social change throughout the country by volunteering to share their knowledge and to allow their strategies to be shared. EFFD's model has been presented to thousands of volunteer fire departments across the country, is part of the [U.S. Fire Administration's 2023 Retention and Recruitment for the Volunteer Emergency Services Guide](#), is highlighted in a textbook to be released in 2025 by Fire Engineering Books, is part of many industry articles guiding other volunteer fire departments, and has been featured in numerous trainings and webinars.

EFFD's successful model can have a positive impact across the country. The time donated by volunteer firefighters, such as EFFD, saves localities in the [U.S. \\$46.9 billion](#) per year. The importance of supporting volunteer fire departments like EFFD cannot be overstated. EFFD's commitment to its own community, with 55 active firefighters, is huge tax savings to its residents. Volunteering also fosters a sense of camaraderie and shared responsibility within the community.

I strongly urge continued support to the East Franklin Fire Department. Their work is not only vital to the safety of their community but also exemplifies the highest values of community service and solidarity. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Together, we can ensure that our volunteer fire departments remain a cornerstone of our community, ready to protect and serve whenever the need arises.

Sincerely,

Candice McDonald

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Deputy Chief Executive Officer

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