

NOMINATION OF KELVIN J. COCHRAN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON

HOMELAND SECURITY AND

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

NOMINATION OF KELVIN J. COCHRAN TO BE ADMINISTRATOR, U.S.
FIRE ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGEN-
CY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

AUGUST 5, 2009

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2009

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NOMINATION OF KELVIN J. COCHRAN

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Joseph I. Lieberman, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Lieberman, Carper, Landrieu, Collins, and Bennett.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LIEBERMAN

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Well, good morning and welcome to this hearing on the nomination of Kelvin James Cochran to be Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Senator Landrieu, we are honored that you are here. You probably have a pressing schedule. If you would like to give your introduction before Senator Collins and I proceed with our opening statements, we would be glad to have you do that.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LANDRIEU

Senator LANDRIEU. Well, thank you, Senator. That would be lovely, and I really appreciate it, and I will be very brief. I really am honored to introduce an extraordinary leader to you, to assume the position, if approved by this Committee and confirmed, as Administrator of U.S. Fire Administration.

Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins, Chief Kelvin Cochran is a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, which is why I am extremely proud. But more than that, he has just shown himself, after years of service, to be a firefighter's firefighter, looking after the lives of his men and women and the professionalism of the departments that he has led. He has, as I said, 28 years of experience understanding fire safety, prevention, and emergency response.

As you all know, the U.S. Fire Administrator is in charge of overseeing, coordinating, and directing national efforts to prevent fires and improve fire response. In 28 years, he has gained experience in every area of fire service, from firefighting to emergency medical services, hazardous materials—we have a lot of that in Louisiana—recruiting, public education, research development, employee counseling, etc.

He served with distinction as chief of the Shreveport Fire Department, assuming responsibility for 600 employees and a \$47

million budget, and then as you know, he moved to Atlanta recently to become chief of the Fire Rescue Department there, with over 1,000 members and a \$74 million budget. And at the national level, he served as President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and First Vice President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

So not only does he bring, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Collins, experience running a fairly major department—Shreveport is the third largest city in Louisiana—moving to quite an international city of Atlanta, so his experience in those cities, in large metropolitan areas, but also he brings his national experience, connecting to fire professionals around the country. He has served this community with distinction in many volunteer capacities.

So I am proud to be with the chief this morning. He is going to tell you a story about how he got into this business, which I am going to save for him to tell because he tells it better than I do. But I am very proud of him, Mr. Chairman, and I think this Committee will find his credentials to be outstanding and excellent, and he will have my vote in support as we move him through the process.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thanks very much, Senator Landrieu. That was impressive, and it means a lot to the Committee that you took the time to come by. Thank you very much.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. As Senator Landrieu indicated, the Fire Administration, I would say for the record, which was established in 1974, has been the primary Federal agency addressing the needs of the Nation's firefighters, with the goal of reducing loss of life and economic loss due to fire and related emergencies.

Among its many activities, the agency trains mid- and senior-level fire and emergency medical services officers at the National Fire Academy, also online; collects, analyzes, and disseminates data and information on fire and other emergency incidents; researches and develops fire prevention and fire safety technology; and helps the FEMA Administrator carry out the duties under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program, the so-called SAFER program, which mean a lot to this Committee and to Members of Congress of all political parties.

Ever since September 11, 2001, and the catastrophe that was Hurricane Katrina, the USFA has also served as a national focal point for the expanded role of firefighters in response to both terrorist disasters and large natural disasters, including those of catastrophic dimensions like Hurricane Katrina.

The Fire Administration has become a lifeline for firefighters, who, like other first responders, run directly into the face of danger while everyone else is running away from it. So we have always felt, on this Committee, that firefighters deserve all the support and training we can give them.

Last year, Congress reauthorized the U.S. Fire Administration, and during that process, we had a chance to study the agency closely. What we found was a solid organization that serves a unique and important role within FEMA, DHS, and the Federal Government, and which merits continued support.

I will not go over your background but just include that in the record because Senator Landrieu did a good job, and maybe she was suggesting what your record says to me, which is that yours is a classic Horatio Alger or American Dream success story, and they are always inspiring for us to see come before the Committee.

Chief, I think you have an understanding of the needs of firefighters, spanning the local and national levels. You have given back to your community not just in your professional service but also as a volunteer in the Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army, and Volunteers of America.

Your nomination has been endorsed by the International Association of Fire Fighters, whose president, our dear friend, Harold Schaitberger is here; the International Association of Fire Chiefs; and the National Fire Protection Association. I would say that you have come before the Committee with the all-star team of endorsements, and that means a lot to us. So we wish you the best of luck.

Senator Collins.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR COLLINS

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As the Chairman has indicated, the agency that Chief Cochran has been nominated to lead—the U.S. Fire Administration—plays a critical role in securing our Nation. Every day across our Nation, firefighters risk their lives and their personal well-being in order to protect others. Their job as first responders is to be skilled, selfless, and urgent. In recent years, we have all become more aware of their acts of bravery and sacrifice.

On September 11, 2001, America's firefighters fearlessly responded to aid and rescue victims. On that day alone, 343 firefighters in New York City lost their lives. In the aftermaths of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, America's firefighters tirelessly answered the call.

And in local communities right now, even as we hold this hearing, firefighters are responding to all manner of emergencies—some of them life-threatening events that severely test the men and women who serve.

Whether they are career or volunteer, America's nearly 1.2 million firefighters exemplify professionalism, dedication, and heroism.

Since 1974, the USFA has been the primary Federal agency for firefighters. Its mission is to serve as an advocate and to help reduce loss of life and diminish the economic impact of fires and related emergencies. This Committee has worked hard to support the Fire Administration's issues and the needs of our Nation's fire services.

In 2006, as part of the landmark FEMA reform law, we elevated the Fire Administrator to the position of Assistant Secretary in recognition of the Fire Administration's vital role in our Nation's preparedness and emergency response system.

In 2008, we reauthorized the Fire Administration to help the fire services better meet their wide-ranging mission. We updated the curriculum of the National Fire Academy, expanded the range of firefighter training programs, promoted the adoption of national voluntary consensus standards for firefighter health and safety,

and established a fire service position at DHS's National Operations Center.

Still, challenges remain, and among the most pressing is the ongoing difficulty that first responders have in communicating with one another in real time, on demand, during a crisis.

Senator Lieberman and I have worked hard, and we have made some progress in the area of interoperable emergency communications, but this is an issue that I will be exploring with the chief this morning.

I am also interested in the chief's perspective on the Department's first responder grant programs. The Chairman and I have consistently fought for more resources for our Nation's fire departments. That includes the FIRE Act grant program, which is set to expire at the end of this fiscal year and must be reauthorized. This program has enabled thousands of departments to respond more effectively to emergencies and disasters of all sizes and causes.

As an original cosponsor of the FIRE Act, I support its clear, unwavering mission to support smaller fire departments with additional funding. Without that assistance, these departments simply could not afford the new life-saving equipment, vehicles, or training. I have seen the impact in the State of Maine where smaller rural departments, often staffed by volunteers, are so dependent on the fire grants in order to upgrade their equipment and training.

I am impressed with Chief Cochran's career. It spans several decades from a rank-and-file post in Shreveport, Louisiana, to chief in Atlanta. Like the Chairman, I also am impressed with the endorsements that he has gathered from the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, and, of course, a group that the Chairman and I work very closely with, the International Association of Fire Fighters.

I, too, want to welcome the representatives of these organizations who are here to endorse the nominee today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Collins.

Chief Cochran has filed responses to a biographical and financial questionnaire, answered prehearing questions submitted by the Committee, and had his financial statements reviewed by the Office of Government Ethics. Without objection, this information will be part of the hearing record, with the exception of the financial data, which are on file and available for public inspection at the Committee offices.

Chief Cochran, I think you know that our Committee rules require that all witnesses at nomination hearings give their testimony under oath, so I would ask you to please stand now and raise your right hand.

Sir, do you swear that the testimony you are about to give the Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Mr. COCHRAN. I do.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you very much. Please be seated. We would welcome your statement now and introduction of any family or friends that you have with you today.

**TESTIMONY OF KELVIN J. COCHRAN¹ TO BE ADMINISTRATOR,
U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MAN-
AGEMENT AGENCY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECUR-
ITY**

Mr. COCHRAN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins, and other Members of the Committee. I am Kelvin James Cochran, nominee for Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration. I want to begin my remarks by expressing my gratitude to Senator Mary Landrieu for her generous introduction. Then I would like to, Mr. Chairman, acknowledge and recognize my wife of 27 years and my oldest of three children who are here with me. Carolyn Cochran is my wife and Tiffane Cochran is my daughter.

You mentioned that I have endorsements from several significant fire service organizations, and you have recognized President Harold Schaitberger of the International Association of Fire Fighters. I also want to recognize the International Association of Fire Chiefs and our President, Larry Grorud, who is also with us today, and our Executive Director, Mark Light. We also have representatives from the National Fire Protection Association with us today, with their support of my nomination.

It is a tremendous honor that I sit before you today. I cannot help but reflect on an experience I had as a 5-year-old kid growing up in Shreveport, Louisiana, of a house fire across the alley from where I lived, where I saw Shreveport firefighters, up close and personal for the first time, who made such an impression on me that this was the day that my dream was born, that one day I wanted to be a firefighter when I grew up. That dream has compelled me from that day to this day, and every day for me is like waking up on a holiday because I realize I am an American firefighter, and I have another opportunity to serve our citizens and Nation in that capacity.

Over my 28-year fire service career, I have had several opportunities at the local, State, and national level to serve fire service organizations. I have had the honor of leading and serving as the chief of the Shreveport Fire Department in Louisiana; the chief of the Atlanta Fire and Rescue Department in the State of Georgia; and at the national level, I have been honored to serve as President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and the First Vice President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. And for the past 2 years, I have been privileged to serve as a board member for the U.S. Fire Administration's Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Additionally, I have been active in fire service professional associations, working collaboratively on committees and task forces on issues that positively impact the fire service industry. These experiences have provided me with a broad knowledge base and familiarity with local, State, and national-level fire service issues to serve and benefit the fire service community.

If confirmed, I will have the distinct honor of serving the American people and the American fire service as U.S. Fire Administrator. I believe my background and experience will bring administrative and operational experience and expertise to the U.S. Fire

¹The prepared statement of Mr. Cochran appears in the Appendix on page 20.

Administration in the furtherance of its mission and will enhance the fire service role in the National Response Framework.

Since its inception, the U.S. Fire Administration has played a significant role in ensuring domestic tranquility through its fire prevention, fire protection, and fire safety education programs in enhancing America's response capabilities and efficiency. The post-September 11, 2001, and post-Hurricane Katrina U.S. Fire Administration has a revised role and responsibility in preparedness and response.

The principal mission of the U.S. Fire Administration is to provide support to America's fire departments and fire service organizations to prevent fires, to eliminate or minimize losses of civilian and firefighter lives, to minimize injuries to civilians and firefighters who are protecting our Nation, and, additionally, to bolster fire service preparedness and response for natural and manmade disasters. The mission of the U.S. Fire Administration also includes providing for the professional development of America's fire service leaders. If confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, I will work to engage Federal partners, fire service stakeholders, and other organizations whose missions are complementary to the U.S. Fire Administration. And I will work to improve all programs and services that will enhance the fire service role to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate incidents which have the potential of causing harm to life, property, and the environment in the United States of America.

And my final remark, Mr. Chairman, is that the U.S. Fire Administration's most notable strength is its strong ties with and support from local fire departments, fire service associations, and State fire service training institutions. Additionally, the U.S. Fire Administration has a history of collaboration with all fire service stakeholders in planning and decisionmaking, which directly impacts fire service programs and operations across our great Nation.

These strengths have positioned the U.S. Fire Administration to maximize its resources to meet the needs of all of its stakeholders and fire departments that it serves. If confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, I will continue to build upon these strengths to shape the future of the U.S. Fire Administration and the fire service of the United States of America.

I thank the Committee for considering my nomination as U.S. Fire Administrator. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. And I look forward to answering any questions that you might have.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you very much, Chief, for that very thoughtful opening statement. I am going to start with the standard three questions that we ask of all nominees before us.

First, is there anything you are aware of in your background that might present a conflict of interest with the duties of the office to which you have been nominated?

Mr. COCHRAN. No.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Second, do you know of anything, personal or otherwise, that would in any way prevent you from fully and honorably discharging the duties of the office to which you have been nominated?

Mr. COCHRAN. No.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. And, third, do you agree without reservation that you will respond to any reasonable summons to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of Congress if you are confirmed?

Mr. COCHRAN. I agree without reservation.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. I thank you very much, and we will go to a first round of questions of 7 minutes per Senator. Let me focus in on a few things that we have talked about so far.

We expect to consider legislation reauthorizing the Assistance to Firefighter Grants, which help fund firefighting equipment, training, and vehicles, as you know. These grants are very important to fire departments around the country, which are working for levels of government that particularly now are very hard pressed for revenue and, of course, have significant personnel-related costs so the purchase of necessary equipment is often put to the bottom.

What steps, if any, would you like us to consider to improve the fire grant program as we reauthorize it?

Mr. COCHRAN. The Assistance to Firefighters Grants and the SAFER grants have benefited the fire service of our Nation tremendously. To have a meaningful approach to improvements, Mr. Chairman, I would engage the Grant Programs Directorate along with other fire service stakeholders and beneficiaries of our Federal grants to fire departments to evaluate our Federal grants as a whole to determine if improvements are necessary.

The grants that we primarily speak of, Assistance to Firefighters and SAFER, have benefited our three different types of fire departments that we commonly refer to as volunteer, combination, and career departments, and there are tremendous needs that still exist. We want to ensure that the viability and credibility of these programs are actually doing what they are designed to do and that we strengthen their credibility by making sure that they have an impact on America's fire service.

So a process of collaboration between fire service stakeholders with the support of the Grant Programs Directorate would allow us to identify areas of improvement, and if confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, I will aggressively pursue those recommendations to enhance these programs.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Good. Well, we will look forward to your input as we go forward with the reauthorization, and I appreciate the intention to do this as a collaborative process.

Let me go to the National Response Framework, which you mentioned briefly in your opening statement. This framework sets out the Nation's overall approach to responding to disasters. It includes a firefighting annex, referred to as Emergency Support Function 4 (ESF-4). It is intended to coordinate Federal firefighting support in the event of a major incident. Interestingly, because of the role the U.S. Forest Service plays in addressing wildfires, it is the coordinating agency for ESF-4. But, of course, the U.S. Fire Administration is included also, in this case as a supporting agency for ESF-4.

I wanted to ask you what you see as USFA's role in carrying out the National Response Framework, both under this firefighting section or annex, ESF-4, and also more generally.

Mr. COCHRAN. The U.S. Fire Administration should be an extremely potent partner with the U.S. Forest Service in ESF-4. Clearly, the frequency and volume of wildland fires and the resources provided through the U.S. Forest Service place them in a position where they are the primary Federal agency in ESF-4.

But due to the target capabilities that rely on the fire service discipline, in other areas outside of wildland fires, the U.S. Fire Administration should be a recognized partner in ESF-4 because it will rely on fire service resources outside of wildland fires to manage certain types of disasters.

I would propose that if there is not a current relationship between the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fire Administration that allows them to work side by side, shoulder to shoulder, to bring the greatest level of effectiveness to ESF-4, it should be assertively pursued by the U.S. Fire Administrator, and, if confirmed, I will lead that initiative.

Additionally, the U.S. Fire Administration should be the most relied on Federal entity for the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA to ensure that the American fire service will be equipped and prepared to be a Federal asset in times that Federally, nationally declared disasters occur.

The U.S. Fire Administrator should be the spokesperson to the American fire service for the Department of Homeland Security on homeland security issues and on preparedness and response issues. Likewise, the U.S. Fire Administration should be a credible spokesperson for the American fire service on meeting their needs where gaps exist that hinder us from being a Federal resource in times of natural disasters.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Well, that was a good answer. I must tell you, as I went over this material in preparation for this hearing, it surprised me to recall that the Forest Service is the coordinating agency for ESF-4. I have a great respect, as we all do, for the Forest Service, but it seems to be a more natural role for the Fire Administrator. I thought you handled that very well. You are not only a great firefighter, you are a great diplomat. But you got your point across, and I urge you, as you get into this position, if you are confirmed, do not hesitate to get into this. And if you think that really there ought to be either a co-leadership or the U.S. Fire Administrator ought to be No. 1 here, do not hesitate to make that case to our Committee or, obviously, within the Administration.

Mr. COCHRAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you. My time is up. Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chief Cochran, I was alarmed to learn that America's fire death rate is one of the highest in the world on a per capita basis, and the statistics are truly startling. In 2007, more than 3,400 civilians lost their lives as a result of fire. Another 18,000 were injured. The same year saw the loss of more than \$14 billion in direct property losses as a result of fires. And firefighters are paying a high price as well: 114 firefighters lost their lives in the line of duty last year; 60 have already died this year as well.

We have seen an improvement in fire losses during the last 20 years, but these numbers are still higher than they should be and

are really unacceptable. What role can the U.S. Fire Administration play in reducing the number of firefighter deaths and civilian casualties?

Mr. COCHRAN. I share your perspective that even though there has been tremendous enhancements, the current numbers in both civilian deaths and injuries, firefighter deaths and injuries, and property loss are still unacceptable. The U.S. Fire Administration has a track record, and a steady track record, of reducing property loss and injuries and deaths to civilians.

We have to take a more assertive role in outreach of our programs in venues that really affect the greatest areas where those losses are occurring. Through our National Fire Data Center and other resources, we should specifically identify those most common areas where the greatest fire losses are occurring as it relates to property, identify those common areas where the greatest losses of lives and injuries are occurring, and develop or revise our fire prevention and fire safety education programs to aggressively address those areas.

Many of those areas, Senator Collins, are in regions of the Nation that do not have the resources to address those problems with their own resources. The U.S. Fire Administration, along with other Federal agencies and nongovernmental agencies, should work collaboratively together to pool their resources to address areas where most of those fire losses are occurring.

Where firefighters are concerned, we have no notable change in the number of firefighters dying in the line of duty and the number of injuries that are occurring to firefighters in the line of duty. My proposal, if confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, would be to engage all Federal agencies and nongovernmental entities that have some resources or role in safety and occupational health to develop a vulnerability assessment model whereby local fire departments or communities can determine at their own level where the most likely vulnerabilities exist that could lead to firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries and, having determined those areas of vulnerability, develop strategic plans to minimize them.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, and please know that this Committee looks forward to working very closely with you to improve those statistics because we are talking literally about lives. And as you point out, the firefighters themselves are paying such a high price. So we look forward to working with you in that area.

I want to follow up on my comments about interoperable emergency communications. After the attacks on our country in 2001, this Committee became more aware of the problem of first responders not being able to communicate with one another and the fact that it exacerbated the loss of life on September 11, 2001.

Therefore, it was particularly disappointing when Hurricane Katrina struck 4 years later, in 2005, that we heard exactly the same problem happened in New Orleans, in particular, but throughout the affected region, and that once again firefighters could not talk to police officers who could not communicate with emergency medical personnel.

Since that time, we have continued to pour literally billions of dollars into interoperable communications grants. The Chairman

and I have worked hard to push the Department to make this a priority. But we are still not there.

So it seems to me that this is a problem that is not just about money. That certainly is part of the problem because it is expensive, but there is more going on.

What do you see as the biggest barriers, the biggest challenges to achieving interoperable communications? And what can we do to push that goal forward?

Mr. COCHRAN. There are three layers, I believe, that create barriers. The top two layers I am not as familiar with as I will be, if confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, and that is, to what extent have Federal-level agencies and nongovernmental agencies at the national level—stakeholders in public safety, communications, and interoperability—unified their efforts toward achieving the goal of interoperability for public safety? And what efforts collectively have Federal-level and national-level stakeholders engaged in pushing forward on achieving broadband spectrum for public safety to address the interoperability issue?

Of course, those are rhetorical questions, but as U.S. Fire Administrator, if confirmed, I believe my role would be to pursue the answers to those questions; and if there are not credible, combined efforts, to lead the initiatives to bring those parties together to do so.

Additionally, there are Federal funds that are specifically directed toward the interoperability issue. I believe that it is time for us as a Nation to determine if those Federal dollars are actually used toward a specific strategic plan that will ultimately reach that goal. And I am not sure at this point whether or not we can say as a Nation, as elected Federal officials, as the administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration and our fire service partners, if we have a strategic plan where the Federal dollars directed toward interoperable communications are actually leading toward that end.

Then, finally, at the local level, there are policies and procedures and operational issues that bring the interoperability issue to the table, and as U.S. Fire Administrator, I believe I would have a role, if confirmed, in making sure that the fire service is doing its part to make sure that happens and that we are partnering with emergency managers and law enforcement agencies to make sure that happens on the operations end.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thanks very much, Senator Collins.

Senator Carper, good morning. Thanks for being here.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Senator CARPER. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Senator Collins, nice to have been with you last night.

Senator COLLINS. Yes.

Senator CARPER. Looking out at the audience, I see two young women sitting here behind you. Do you have two daughters? [Laughter.]

Mr. COCHRAN. I have two, but only one is here. The other one is my wife.

Senator CARPER. I am sorry. My eyesight is pretty good, and she is not that far away. Nice of you to share your husband with us. And what is your daughter's name, the one who is here?

Mr. COCHRAN. My daughter is Tiffane Cochran.

Senator CARPER. Tiffane, thanks for sharing the old man with the people of this country.

I enjoyed meeting with you in my office a week or two ago. Thank you for coming by and for bringing your family with you. Sometimes when people have been nominated for positions like this, I say to them at a hearing of this nature when their family is not with them, "Does your spouse know you are doing this? Does she know you have been nominated for this position?" Obviously, she knows, and by her presence here today, I guess she has given her approval. And I suspect that we will, too.

There were a number of things that I liked about your background. First of all, I was just impressed with your demeanor and your ability to communicate. I like the depth of your service, not only in Shreveport but in Atlanta, and I think it prepares you well, and I like your participation in international and national organizations, which I think has given you a good base for undertaking this responsibility, should you be confirmed.

Let me ask a couple of questions. First of all, why do you want to do this, or why are you willing to do this? It is going to disrupt your life. It is going to give you probably more work than you maybe want to do. But it will be a lot of work, and it will not be easy.

Mr. COCHRAN. Well, first of all, Senator, I think the short answer is that I just believe I can make a difference. That question is often asked in promotional opportunities throughout my career, and my answer has been consistently the same. I believe I can make a difference.

During all of my 28-year career, I have had this passion for serving through the fire service citizens on a local, State, and Federal level, and it led me to pursuing leadership opportunities to become the chief of the Shreveport Fire Department, later the chief of the City of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, pursuing board member elected positions in the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs and the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and participation on other committees and task forces. It is just something that is extremely rewarding to serve our Nation as a firefighter and as a fire chief.

I believe collectively over the years I have garnered enough experience and training and education where, if confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, I will continue a track record of service to citizens and country and garner support from Federal and nongovernmental stakeholders in the fire service to improve what we do for our Nation.

Senator CARPER. Sometimes we meet people in our lives who have what I describe as the "heart of a servant," and just a need to serve, a desire to serve. I think you have that heart of a servant, and where does that come from?

Mr. COCHRAN. Well, the major part of that comes from my faith. I just believe that is why I was born, to serve, and one of the strange consequences of a relentless desire to serve is being promoted to higher levels to be able to serve at a greater capacity and to be able to serve more people. I think that the more lowly you are in servanthood, the greater the opportunities that will come your way.

Senator CARPER. I think you are absolutely right.

You mentioned, as you had opportunities for new responsibilities, that you have been asked why do you want to do this, and you said, "I want to make a difference with my life." How do you think you might, and what are some of the ways you might make a difference in this role?

Mr. COCHRAN. I believe that the issues that Senator Collins addressed with regard to reducing loss of property, reducing the loss of civilians' and firefighters' lives and injuries to civilians and firefighters is the greatest way that I could really make a difference.

I also believe that there are new initiatives in fire prevention and fire safety education that should be initiated to minimize further loss of lives in multi-family complexes and senior citizens' complexes and that fire home sprinklers are one of the greatest public safety and fire safety initiatives—fire prevention initiatives are the future—in which I would, if confirmed, want to see the U.S. Fire Administration play a greater role.

In just 5 to 10 years, I would hope to have made a difference so that, as a Nation, we can see a marked decrease in the number of line-of-duty deaths and injuries to firefighters after having served as U.S. Fire Administrator.

Senator CARPER. As you and I discussed, Delaware has not a lot of paid firefighters. We have a number in Wilmington; they are good, too. But we have a lot of volunteer firefighters, and I suspect the same is true in Maine, and I believe in Connecticut, but particularly true in Delaware.

We talked a bit about the challenge in recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters. It is tough to get people to volunteer for a number of service opportunities these days. Fortunately, many do.

But what is your experience and understanding of volunteer firefighting issues? And how might you be working with that community if you are confirmed?

And, second, can you describe some of the common challenges between volunteer and career firefighters that you think can be overcome?

Mr. COCHRAN. Yes, sir. In the city of Shreveport, Louisiana, was the largest fire department in northwest Louisiana. And even though we were the big boys, so to speak, there were risks in our community that, if they were to occur, we would not have enough resources to meet the needs for the citizens of Shreveport, and it made it necessary for us to build relationships with local volunteers.

Subsequently, there were issues that could occur in volunteer communities that they did not have the resources to meet on their own, and they would rely on the Shreveport Fire Department to help them meet their needs.

So I have a tremendous respect for a joint partnership where both volunteer and career departments are structured and have relationships to support each other.

In addition to that, I have a tremendous respect for the fact that in our Nation, if there is going to be fire protection in a community, it has to be provided completely through volunteers—men and women who have decided that they are going to organize themselves in such a way that, should fires occur, they will provide the

support necessary to extinguish fires or rescue entrapped victims. That is a tremendous commitment from working people when there is no funded fire protection available.

The U.S. Fire Administration should play an ongoing role, as it has in the past, to make sure that we are a support to any community that relies solely on volunteers to have its resource needs met or available when fires do occur.

And, finally, in my role as board member for the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), we have a section known as the Combination and Volunteers Section of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. We also have a relationship with the National Volunteer Fire Council. Since I have a history of working with career departments, I will not try to attempt to think that I am keenly aware and sensitive to all volunteer issues, but will rely on the Volunteer and Combination Section of the IAFC and the National Volunteer Fire Council for the U.S. Fire Administration to be intimately involved with them, to see to it that we are using our resources to help them meet their needs long term.

Senator CARPER. All right. Thanks for that response. My time has expired.

Mr. Chairman, thanks very much for holding this hearing, and it is nice to see you again, Chief, and to meet your family.

Mr. COCHRAN. Nice to see you, sir.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Senator Carper.

Chief, I think we will give each of the Members of the Committee a chance to ask one more question. Mine is on the Fire Academy, which provides very valuable training to firefighters and has done so over the years, both at its residential facility in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and also by distance learning in cooperation with fire service organizations and, in fact, universities.

In 2008, the Fire Academy, as an example, provided more than 4,000 courses and reached more than 121,000 students, which is an impressive figure. I know you have benefited from the academy's training and spoken of its importance to your career development. I wonder, as you are coming in as Fire Administrator, what do you see as the academy's major challenges and its major opportunities?

Mr. COCHRAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that the challenge that we face with the National Fire Academy is to continue our pattern of growth in meeting the training and educational needs of the American fire service. To do that, we have to have a sustained program of periodic review of courses that are still making a difference to enhance their viability in today's fire service and in the future; but also we have to continue to scan the fire service environment for other training needs that local- and State-level fire training institutions are strapped to actually meet.

The National Fire Academy touches many fire service careers on an annual basis. Last year, over 8,000 participants came to the Emmitsburg campus, and through our other outreach programs through Internet and other means, State training and local institutions, well over 115,000 firefighters were touched—volunteer, combination, and career departments alike. So we have to continue to strive for excellence in that regard.

In the future, one of the greatest challenges is going to be how do we assist the American fire service in overcoming the tremen-

dous level of attrition and loss of formal knowledge and institutional knowledge. I think the National Fire Academy is one of the greatest solutions to that future challenge, and there is no substitute for the on-campus experience in training fire officers and chief officers for the future. But our current capacity is not suitable to meet the current demand, so we have to look for future ways of expanding capacity on the Emmitsburg campus to bring young fire officers and chief officers to Emmitsburg so that the expectation of quality leadership that Americans have come to expect in their local-level fire departments can still be met through the programs at the Emmitsburg campus.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Excellent. Thank you. Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me associate myself with the comments that the Chairman just made about the importance of the Fire Academy. I have had many professional firefighters from Maine go to take advantage of the course work, but the demand is greater than can be accommodated, and yet that training is so specialized that it is not available in very many other places. So I look forward to working with you on that.

I also want to associate myself with the comments made by Senator Carper about the volunteer fire services. In Maine, we are fortunate to have absolutely top-notch professional firefighters, and we are also fortunate to have very hard-working volunteers who staff more than 96 percent of Maine's fire departments; 96 percent are comprised of either volunteer or mostly volunteer firefighters. So paying attention to both the professional departments and the volunteer and the combination departments is critical, as Senator Carper indicated.

I also want to encourage you to keep the Fire Grant program with little bureaucracy. One of the reasons it is so popular now is that it has a peer review system that works extremely well to ensure that the money does not get siphoned off by bureaucracy but really goes directly to fire departments. And I think it is very successful.

My final question has to do with public awareness campaigns. The data that I used in my first question to you are startling in terms of how much we have to do to improve public awareness and education and improve safety. And one of the Fire Administration's primary responsibilities is public awareness and education.

All of us are concerned when we learn of a household where lives were lost in a fire because they did not have smoke alarms, just something as basic as that. There is so much more that could be done to educate families on how to evacuate their home when there is a fire.

What can the Fire Administration do to improve its education and awareness campaigns to decrease the loss of life and property?

Mr. COCHRAN. That is a great question, Senator, but I have to ask: Was that a fire alarm that we just heard? [Laughter.]

Senator COLLINS. It was, fortunately, not a fire alarm. Those were bells telling us that we are in the midst of a quorum call, so you can relax, and you do not have to evacuate us.

Mr. COCHRAN. I can relax.

Senator COLLINS. But we would look to you if, in fact, we had to evacuate.

Mr. COCHRAN. I am prepared to lead us if that is the case.

The role that the U.S. Fire Administration has in fire safety education and fire prevention, as I mentioned earlier, has had good results, but there is still work to be done in outreach for prevention efforts. The greatest categories of fire deaths are still children 5 years and younger and senior citizens above 50. And it is pretty clear where demographically those deaths occur. They are in low-to moderate-income communities, minority communities, and certain types of dwellings. Rather than continue a broad-brush approach to fire safety education, we should have a more targeted, focused approach on the areas where the risks are greatest.

I believe we have programs that actually focus in those areas currently, but in my current assessment, I am not aware of how assertive and how specifically targeted they are. If confirmed as U.S. Fire Administrator, I believe it would be prudent for me to bring together all of our partners in fire prevention and fire safety education within the U.S. Fire Administration and other Federal agencies to make sure that our programs are targeted programs in the areas where the greatest needs are.

Again, some communities and municipalities do not have the personnel or other resources to effect fire safety education programs to address those needs.

There should be, in my estimation, noncompetitive grants and other programs available to address those needs in communities that cannot afford to meet them.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Chief.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Senator Collins.

Chief, I think your testimony and appearance today have been very impressive. You obviously, from your biography, have a lot of experience that is relevant to the position to which you have been nominated, but I have been impressed by the way you have handled the questions. You are very well informed. You have some ideas based on your experience that you are taking in some sense of priority. So I thank you very much for your testimony. You have given me, certainly, confidence about your capacity to handle this position.

We are going to close the hearing record at the close of business today. In other words, any additional statements or questions by yourself or questions from us, are due at the close of day because, if possible, with Senator Collins' agreement—I do not know whether it is going to be possible—I would like to try to get you confirmed before we formally go on recess for a month, which presumably will be on Friday. But thanks for your career; thanks for your willingness to serve.

Senator Collins, would you like to add anything?

Senator COLLINS. I just concur in your assessment of the nominee, and I also pledge to try to move Chief Cochran's nomination through the full Senate prior to our adjourning for the recess.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Chief, would you like to quit while you are ahead or say anything in your defense? [Laughter.]

Mr. COCHRAN. Absolutely. Thank you, Senator Lieberman; thank you, Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Chairman LIEBERMAN. Thank you. The hearing is adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 11:01 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

Nomination Hearing of Kelvin James Cochran
To be Administrator of the United States Fire Administration
At the Department of Homeland Security
Chairman Joe Lieberman
August 5, 2009

Good morning and welcome to this hearing on the nomination of Kelvin James Cochran to be Administrator of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) within the Department of Homeland Security. Senator Landrieu, we are honored that you're here.

The U.S. Fire Administration, which was established in 1974, has been the primary federal agency addressing the needs of the nation's firefighters, with the goal of reducing life and economic loss due to fire and related emergencies.

Among its many activities, the agency trains mid- and senior-level fire and emergency medical services officers at the National Fire Academy, and also online; collects, analyzes, and disseminates data and information on fire and other emergency incidents; researches and develops fire prevention and fire safety technology; and helps the FEMA Administrator by carrying out the duties under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program (AFG) and the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant Program (SAFER) – which provide critical assistance to local fire departments and means a lot to this Committee and members of both parties.

Ever since September 11 and the catastrophe that was Hurricane Katrina, USFA has also served as a national focal point for the expanded role of firefighters in the response to terrorist and natural disasters, such as Katrina. The Fire Administration really is a lifeline for these firefighters, who, like other first responders, run directly into the face of danger while everyone else is running away from it. This Committee has always felt they deserve all the support we can give them.

Last year, Congress reauthorized the U.S. Fire Administration, and during that process, we had a chance to study the agency closely. What we found was a solid organization that serves a unique and important role within FEMA, DHS, and the federal government, and which merits continued support for its programs.

I won't go into your background because Senator Landrieu did such a great job with it, but your background to me is such a classic Horatio Alger, American Dream story.

Clearly, Chief Cochran has an understanding of the needs of the firefighters, spanning the local and national levels. You have given back to your community not just in his career choice but also by being a volunteer in the Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army, and Volunteers of America.

Your nomination has been endorsed by the International Association of Fire Fighters, whose president is here; the International Associate of Fire Chiefs; and the National Fire Protection Association. I would say that you come before the Committee with the all-star team of endorsements and that means a lot to us. I wish you the best of luck.

Opening Statement
Senator Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

**Nomination of
Kelvin Cochran
To be Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration**

August 5, 2009

★ ★ ★

The agency that Chief Cochran has been nominated to lead – the U.S. Fire Administration – plays a crucial role in securing our nation. Every day across our nation, firefighters risk their lives and their personal well-being to protect others. Their job as first-responders is to be skilled, selfless and urgent. In recent years, we have collectively witnessed their acts of bravery and sacrifice.

On 9/11, America's firefighters fearlessly responded to aid and rescue victims. On that day alone, 343 firefighters in New York City lost their lives. In the aftermaths of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, America's firefighters tirelessly answered the call.

And in local communities right now, firefighters are responding to all manner of emergencies – some of them life-threatening events that severely test the men and women who serve.

Whether they are career or volunteer, America's nearly 1.2 million firefighters exemplify professionalism, dedication, and heroism.

Since 1974, the USFA has been the primary Federal agency for firefighters. Its mission is to serve as an advocate and to help reduce loss of life and diminish the economic impact of fires and related emergencies. This Committee has worked diligently to support USFA issues and the needs of the nation's fire services.

In 2006, as part of our landmark FEMA reform law, we elevated the Fire Administrator to the position of Assistant Secretary, recognizing the USFA's vital role in the nation's preparedness and emergency response system.

In 2008, we reauthorized the USFA to help the fire services better meet their wide-ranging mission. We updated the curriculum of the National Fire Academy, expanded the range of firefighter training programs, promoted the adoption of national voluntary consensus standards for firefighter health and safety, and established a fire service position at DHS's National Operations Center.

Still, challenges remain. Among the most pressing is the ongoing difficulty that first-responders have in communicating with each other in real time, on demand, during a crisis.

We have made progress in the area of interoperable emergency communications. Senator Lieberman and I have passed legislation to increase funding, accelerate the development of technology standards, and emphasize solutions to non-technological barriers, such as the absence of governing agreements and standard operating procedures. But more work must be done, and I look forward to exploring this issue with Chief Cochran.

I also am interested in the Chief's perspective on the Department's first-responder grant programs. The Chairman and I have consistently fought for funding increases to provide critical resources to our nation's fire departments. This includes the FIRE Act grant program, which is set to expire at the end of the fiscal year and must be renewed. This program has enabled thousands of departments to respond quickly and safely to emergencies and disasters of all sizes and causes.

As a co-sponsor of the original FIRE Act, I supported its clear, unwavering mission to support small, largely rural departments with additional funding. Without that assistance, these departments simply could not afford new lifesaving equipment, vehicles, or training. These small rural departments can be found in states all over the country, including the State of Maine, which is known for its rich tradition of volunteer firefighters. In fact, the most recent Fire Administration statistics show that more than 96 percent of Maine's fire departments are volunteer or mostly volunteer.

Chief Cochran's impressive career spans several decades, from a rank-and-file post in Shreveport, Louisiana, to Chief in Atlanta. He also has attained positions of national leadership in the International Association of Fire Chiefs and the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association. And I am pleased to see his endorsement by the International Association of Fire Fighters.

**Opening Statement
Kelvin J. Cochran, Nominee
Fire Administrator, United States Fire Administration
United States Senate
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins, and Members of the Committee. I am Kelvin J. Cochran, nominee for Administrator of the United States Fire Administration (USFA). Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to Senator Mary Landrieu for her generous introduction.

It is indeed an honor to sit before you today. I cannot help but reflect on the experience of a house fire across the alley from where my family lived in Shreveport, Louisiana. Although I was only five years old at the time, seeing the firefighters fight that fire made such an impression on me. My dream of being a firefighter when I grew up was born that day. I have been consumed with that dream from that day even until now.

Over my twenty-eight year fire service career, I have served at the local, state and national level of fire service organizations. I have had the honor of leading and serving as Fire Chief of the Shreveport Fire Department in Louisiana and the City of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department in Georgia. At the national level, I have served as President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and as 1st Vice President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). For the past two years I have had the privilege of serving on the Board of Visitors (BOV) of the USFA's National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Additionally, I am active in fire service professional associations working collaboratively on committees and task forces on issues which positively impact our industry. These experiences have provided me with a broad knowledge base and familiarity with the local and national fire service community.

If confirmed, I will have the distinct honor of serving the American people and the American Fire Service as US Fire Administrator. I believe my background and experience will bring administrative and operational expertise to the USFA in the furtherance of its mission and will enhance the fire service role in the National Response Framework.

Since its inception, the USFA has played a significant role in “ensuring domestic tranquility” through fire prevention, fire safety education, and enhancing America’s fire service response capabilities and efficiency. The post-September 11th and post-Hurricane Katrina USFA has a revised role and responsibility in preparedness and response.

The principal mission of the USFA is to provide support to America’s fire departments and fire service organizations to prevent fires, to eliminate or minimize the loss of civilian and firefighter lives when fires occur, to eliminate or minimize injuries to civilians and firefighters related to fires, and to bolster fire service preparedness for and response to natural and manmade disasters. The mission of the USFA also includes providing for the professional development of America’s fire service leaders. If confirmed as US Fire Administrator, I will work to engage federal partners, fire service stakeholders and other organizations whose missions are complementary to the USFA. I will work to improve all programs and services which enhance the fire service role to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate incidents which have the potential of causing harm to life, property and the environment in the United States of America.

Efforts to reduce property loss and loss of civilian lives continue to improve. However, the USFA needs to play a more assertive role to improve mitigation of line of duty deaths and injuries to firefighters. If confirmed, developing a vulnerability assessment instrument which

evaluates the potential risks of line of duty deaths and injuries at the local level will be a high priority.

One of the primary responsibilities of the USFA is to serve as the nation's leader in fire prevention initiatives. As such, a relentless effort toward public awareness and public education must continue. We cannot become satisfied or complacent in our efforts to reduce the loss of life and property. Campaigns yielding great results must continue. Future efforts should focus on fire safety education in multifamily and senior citizen complexes, especially in older low to moderate income minority communities to minimize incidents of mass fatality fires. The USFA should use data from the NFDC (National Fire Data Center) to identify areas across the nation that fit the demographic of highest risk populations for fire deaths, then partner with local fire departments to provide aggressive fire safety and fire prevention and awareness programs in those areas; and in multifamily and senior citizen high rise complexes.

Future USFA fire prevention campaigns should also include encouraging home builders and home owners constructing new homes to install home fire sprinkler systems. Homes constructed in rural and suburban areas where fire protection is limited should be specifically targeted.

The USFA's most notable strength is the agency's strong ties with and support from local fire departments, fire service associations, and state fire service training institutions. Additionally, USFA has a history of collaboration with all fire service stakeholders in the planning and decision making process which directly impacts fire service programs and operations across the nation. These strengths have positioned the USFA to maximize its resources to meet the needs of its stakeholders. If confirmed as Fire Administrator, I will

continue to build upon these strengths to shape the future the USFA and the fire service of the United States of America.

I thank the Committee for considering my nomination as U.S. Fire Administrator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

BIOGRAPHICAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION REQUESTED OF NOMINEES

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. **Name:** (Include any former names used.)
 - Kelvin James Cochran
2. **Position to which nominated:**
 - Administrator of the United States Fire Administration
3. **Date of nomination:**
 - July 28, 2009
4. **Address:** (List current place of residence and office addresses.)
 - Home: REDACTED
 - Work: 675 Ponce de Leon Avenue; Atlanta, GA 30308
5. **Date and place of birth:**
 - January 23, 1960; Shreveport, Louisiana.
6. **Marital status:** (Include maiden name of wife or husband's name.)
 - Married; Carolyn Fay Cochran (Marshall - maiden name)
7. **Names and ages of children:**
 - Tiffane Michelle Cochran; 24 years old
 - Kelton Jamaal Cochran; 22 years old
 - Camille Sherreal Cochran; 20 years old
8. **Education:** List secondary and higher education institutions, dates attended, degree received and date degree granted.
 - Louisiana Tech University; August 2002-November 2004; M.A. Industrial/Organizational Psychology; November 2004
 - Wiley College; January 1996 - December 1998; 2-year program; B.S. Organizational Management, May 1999
 - Woodlawn High School; August 1974-May 1978; High School diploma; May 1978

9. **Employment record:** List all jobs held since college, and any relevant or significant jobs held prior to that time, including the title or description of job, name of employer, location of work, and dates of employment. (Please use separate attachment, if necessary.)
- Chief of Department, City of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, 675 Ponce de Leon Avenue; Atlanta, GA 30308; January 2008 - present
 - Chief of Department, City of Shreveport Fire Department, 263 North Common Street, Shreveport, LA 71101; August 1999 - December 31, 2007
 - Assistant Chief Training Officer City of Shreveport Fire Department, 263 North Common Street, Shreveport, LA 71101; 1990-1999
 - Training Officer City of Shreveport Fire Department, 263 North Common Street, Shreveport, LA 71101; 1985-1990
 - Firefighter, City of Shreveport Fire Department, 263 North Common Street, Shreveport, LA 71101; 1981-1985
 - Safety/Security Officer, General Motors, 7600 General Motors Blvd., Shreveport, LA 71101; October 1990 - June 1994
10. **Government experience:** List any advisory, consultative, honorary or other part-time service or positions with federal, State, or local governments, other than those listed above.
- Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Commission - Commissioner (2005-2007)
 - Louisiana Urban Search and Rescue Commission - Commissioner (2006-2007)
11. **Business relationships:** List all positions currently or formerly held as an officer, director, trustee, partner, proprietor, agent, representative, or consultant of any corporation, company, firm, partnership, or other business enterprise, educational or other institution.
- None
12. **Memberships:** List all memberships, affiliations, or and offices currently or formerly held in professional, business, fraternal, scholarly, civic, public, charitable or other organizations.
- Former Memberships
- Volunteers of America - Shreveport, LA (former board member) (2003-2007)
 - Boy Scouts of America - Shreveport, LA (former board member) (2003-2007)
 - Salvation Army - Shreveport, LA (former board member) (2003-2006)
 - National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ) (former board member) (2002-2005)
 - Fred D. Lee Lodge No. 259 - Prince Hall Free Masonry (1996-2002)
 - Shreveport Chapter of International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF) (1989-1990)

Current Memberships

- Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association (1999-Present)
 - Alternate Board Member (2000-2001)
 - Board Member (2001-2002)
 - Treasurer (2002-2003)
 - Secretary (2003-2004)
 - Vice President
 - President, (2005-May 2006)
- International Association of Fire Chiefs (1994-Present)
 - 2nd Vice President (2005-2006)
 - 1st Vice President (2006-2007)
- National Fire Protection Association (1990-Present)
- Board of Visitors – National Fire Academy (2006-Present)

13. **Political affiliations and activities:**

- (a) List all offices with a political party which you have held or any public office for which you have been a candidate.
- None
- (b) List all memberships and offices held in and services rendered to any political party or election committee during the last 10 years.
- None
- (c) Itemize all political contributions to any individual, campaign organization, political party, political action committee, or similar entity of \$50 or more during the past 5 years.
- None

14. **Honors and awards:** List all scholarships, fellowships, honorary degrees, honorary society memberships, military medals and any other special recognitions for outstanding service or achievements.

- Shreveport Times/ Alliance for Education 2003 Leadership Award
- National Conference for Community and Justice 2002 Humanitarian Award

15. **Published writings:** Provide the Committee with two copies of any books, articles, reports, or other published materials which you have written."Leadership" Column – FireRescue magazine

2009 Article

- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Still Standing," *FireRescue Magazine*, April 2009

2006 Columns

- Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Sum vs. the Parts," *FireRescue Magazine*, January 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Sum vs. the Parts," Part II, *FireRescue Magazine*, February 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Art of Resiliency," *FireRescue Magazine*, March 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Stand Together or Fall Apart," *FireRescue Magazine*, April 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Climate Control," *FireRescue Magazine*, May 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Value of Feedback," *FireRescue Magazine*, June 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Words of the Chief," *FireRescue Magazine*, July 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Image is Everything," *FireRescue Magazine*, August 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Straddle the fence," *FireRescue Magazine*, September 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Passing the Torch," *FireRescue Magazine*, October 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Decisions, Decisions!" *FireRescue Magazine*, November 2006
- Cochran, Kelvin J. "Dreams, Determination, Decisions & Destiny," *FireRescue Magazine*, December 2006

Cochran, Kelvin J. "The Greater Debtor—Successors and Predecessors." *Fire Chief Magazine*; May 2006

Cochran, Kelvin J. "America's Response to Hurricane Katrina: The First Great Test of the Department of Homeland Security." Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Sections Position Paper, October 2005.

Cochran, Kelvin J. Chief Fire Officer's Desk Reference: Chapter 1—Management and Leadership; and Chapter 25—The Fire Chief of the Future; May 2005. (After I submitted these chapters for publication, I signed over rights to the publisher, Bartlett and Jones Publishing. I have requested a copy, and I will provide it to the Committee as soon as I received it.)

16. **Speeches:**

- (a) Provide the Committee with two copies of any formal speeches you have delivered during the last 5 years which you have copies of and are on topics relevant to the position for which you have been nominated. Provide copies of any testimony to Congress, or to any other legislative or administrative body.

- America's Response to Hurricane Katrina, delivered twice; first time in Birmingham, England at the Chief Fire Officers' Association of the United Kingdom in October 2005 and the second time in Brno, Czech Republic, Pyro Meeting 2006 in May 2006; (powerpoint is attached)
- Shelter Management Operations, Chicago Fire Department's Life Safety Conference, March 2006 (powerpoint is attached)
- The Spirit of the American Firefighter; I have delivered this speech several times. The first time was in Columbia, South Carolina at South Carolina State Fire Academy for Staffing Command School; subsequently I delivered the same speech at firefighter graduations, conferences, and memorial services from 2003 - May 2009.

I have spoken at many high school and college graduations, churches, and in front of civic groups. I did not prepare written remarks for these events.

- (b) Provide a list of all speeches and testimony you have delivered in the past 10 years, except for those the text of which you are providing to the Committee. Please provide a short description of the speech or testimony, its date of delivery, and the audience to whom you delivered it.
- None

17. **Selection:**

- (a) Do you know why you were chosen for this nomination by the President?

I believe the President nominated me because we share the same vision for the future of the U.S. Fire Administration and because he believes that my 28 years of experience with all phases of the fire service at the federal and local level will help achieve those goals. Specifically, the President's announcement focused on my experience in the following areas: fire fighting, emergency medical services, hazardous materials, recruiting, public education, research and development, employee counseling, discipline, performance evaluation, and administration, with specialization in training and strategic planning/facilitating.

- (b) What do you believe in your background or employment experience affirmatively qualifies you for this particular appointment?

I believe that the fire service is a critical actor in maximizing America's preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters. Over my 28-year fire service career, I have served at the local and federal levels and I understand the needs of the fire service community. I have worked as the Chief of the fire department for the City of Shreveport, Louisiana and the City of Atlanta, Georgia. I also served at the national level as the President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and as the 1st Vice President of the International

Association of Fire Chiefs. Additionally, I am a member of fire service professional associations. This experience has given me a broad knowledge base and familiarity with the local and federal fire service community. I believe my background and experience will bring administrative and operational expertise to the U.S. Fire Administration and enhance the fire service role in the National Response Framework.

B. EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

1. Will you sever all connections with your present employers, business firms, business associations or business organizations if you are confirmed by the Senate?
 - Yes
2. Do you have any plans, commitments or agreements to pursue outside employment, with or without compensation, during your service with the government? If so, explain.
 - No
3. Do you have any plans, commitments or agreements after completing government service to resume employment, affiliation or practice with your previous employer, business firm, association or organization, or to start employment with any other entity?
 - No
4. Has anybody made a commitment to employ your services in any capacity after you leave government service?
 - No
5. If confirmed, do you expect to serve out your full term or until the next Presidential election, whichever is applicable?
 - Yes
6. Have you ever been asked by an employer to leave a job or otherwise left a job on a non-voluntary basis? If so, please explain.
 - No

C. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

1. Describe any business relationship, dealing or financial transaction which you have had during the last 10 years, whether for yourself, on behalf of a client, or acting as an agent, that could in any way constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position to which you have been nominated.
 - In connection with the nomination process, I have consulted with the Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Homeland Security's designated agency ethics official to identify potential conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest will be resolved in accordance with the terms of an ethics agreement that I have entered into with the Department's designated agency ethics official. I am not aware of any other potential conflicts of interest.
2. Describe any activity during the past 10 years in which you have engaged for the purpose of directly or indirectly influencing the passage, defeat or modification of any legislation or affecting the administration or execution of law or public policy, other than while in a federal government capacity.
 - None
3. Do you agree to have written opinions provided to the Committee by the designated agency ethics officer of the agency to which you are nominated and by the Office of Government Ethics concerning potential conflicts of interest or any legal impediments to your serving in this position?
 - Yes

D. LEGAL MATTERS

1. Have you ever been disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics for unprofessional conduct by, or been the subject of a complaint to any court, administrative agency, professional association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If so, provide details.
 - No
2. Have you ever been investigated, arrested, charged or convicted (including pleas of guilty or nolo contendere) by any federal, State, or other law enforcement authority for violation of any federal, State, county or municipal law, other than a minor traffic offense? If so, provide details.
 - No

3. Have you or any business of which you are or were an officer, director or owner ever been involved as a party in interest in any administrative agency proceeding or civil litigation? If so, provide details.
- While I was Chief of the Shreveport Fire Department, two firefighters who had been disciplined internally appealed their decisions to the civil service review board and then to Louisiana state court. Both the board and the state court upheld the discipline as legal and appropriate. During the appeal process, the two firefighters also publicly complained to the Shreveport City Council about being disciplined. In order to respond to questions from the City Council, I ordered the firefighters to provide the Department written statements of their complaints. They refused, and were disciplined for insubordination. In December 2003, the two firefighters filed a case in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana, *Ivory v. Shreveport*, naming several defendants, including me, and claiming First Amendment violations. To the best of my recollection, the case was dismissed.
 - In *Buford v. Atlanta*, filed in 2008 in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, an Atlanta Fire Department employee alleged that a supervisor had discriminated against him in his job assignment. I was named as one of several defendants. The plaintiff had been wrongfully terminated by the Fire Department prior to my tenure as Chief, and had subsequently been rehired. Because his previous position had been filled in the interim, a supervisor placed the plaintiff in a different position with equivalent pay. As Chief, I approved the supervisor's placement decision, but was otherwise uninvolved in the matter. The case is pending.

To the best of my knowledge, I was not a named party in any of the following cases, but they involved the City of Shreveport Fire Department during my tenure as Chief:

- In *Dean v. Shreveport*, 438 F.3d 448 (5th Cir. 2006), plaintiffs challenged procedures established by the City of Shreveport to remedy past race and gender discrimination in accordance with a 1980 consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice. Under these procedures, which were established prior to my tenure at the Fire Department, entrance exam scores were ranked on separate lists based on the applicants' race and gender, in order to meet diversity goals set by the 1980 consent decree. A federal district court upheld these procedures. The appellate court, however, reversed this decision in part, and found that past discrimination no longer warranted the procedure. During the course of the litigation, I helped devise and institute a new hiring system that is in place today and, to the best of my knowledge, has never been challenged. The new system encourages diversity but does not give a quantifiable advantage to any particular applicant.
- In approximately 2000, I recommended to the civil service board that the maximum recruiting age for the Department should be increased from 28 to 35. The board approved the change. Local 514 of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) challenged the board's decision in district court, claiming it would adversely impact the

existing workers' pension plan. The court overturned the board's decision, and the city did not pursue the case further.

- In 2000, I won approval from the civil service board to add a requirement that officers in the Department have an Associate's Degree beginning in 2010. In approximately 2001 or 2002, Local 514 of the IAFF challenged this decision in Louisiana district court. The court overturned the board's decision, and the city did not pursue the case further.
 - As Chief, I authorized incentive pay of \$50 per shift for paramedics and paramedic supervisors who agreed to take certain assignments. Three related suits were filed objecting to the incentive pay and claiming that it violated civil service pay regulations. The cases are pending.
4. For responses to question 3, please identify and provide details for any proceedings or civil litigation that involve actions taken or omitted by you, or alleged to have been taken or omitted by you, while serving in your official capacity.
- Please see my response to question 3, above.
5. Please advise the Committee of any additional information, favorable or unfavorable, which you feel should be considered in connection with your nomination.
- None

E. FINANCIAL DATA

All information requested under this heading must be provided for yourself, your spouse, and your dependents. (This information will not be published in the record of the hearing on your nomination, but it will be retained in the Committee's files and will be available for public inspection.)

- REDACTED -

AFFIDAVIT

KELVIN JAMES COCHRAN being duly sworn, hereby states that he/she has read and signed the foregoing Statement on Biographical and Financial Information and that the information provided therein is, to the best of his/her knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.

Kelvin James Cochran

Subscribed and sworn before me this 29 day of July, 2009

Sharrin C. Williams
Notary Public

My Commission Expires
January 16, 2010
Fulton County, GA

**U. S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Pre-hearing Questionnaire
For the Nomination of Kelvin J. Cochran to be
Administrator, U. S. Fire Administration, Department of Homeland Security**

I. Nomination Process and Conflicts of Interest

1. Why do you believe the President nominated you to serve as Administrator of the U. S. Fire Administration (USFA)?

The President nominated me because we share the same vision for the USFA: We both believe in the critical importance of federal, state and local governments collaborating to efficiently prepare for, respond to and recover from fires, as well as a range of other disasters, that threaten the lives and property of thousands of Americans every year. The President also nominated me because he believes my twenty-eight years of experience with all phases of the fire service at the federal and local level will help achieve our shared goals. Specifically, the President's announcement focused on my experience ranging from firefighting and emergency medical services, to public education and performance evaluation. Additionally, I believe the President valued my specialization in training and strategic planning.

2. Were any conditions, express or implied, attached to your nomination? If so, please explain.

No.

3. What specific background and experience affirmatively qualifies you to be Administrator of USFA?

I believe the fire service is a critical actor in maximizing America's preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters. Over my twenty-eight year fire service career, I have served at the local and federal levels, and I understand the needs of the fire service community. I have worked as the Chief at both the Shreveport Fire Department in Louisiana and the City of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department. I have also served at the national level as President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and as the 1st Vice President of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). For the past three years I have been a member of the Board of Visitors (BOV) of the USFA's National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Additionally, I am an active member in fire service professional associations. These experiences have provided me with a broad knowledge base and familiarity with the local and national fire service community. I believe my

background and experience will bring administrative and operational expertise to the USFA and enhance the fire service role in the National Response Framework (NRF).

4. Have you made any commitments with respect to the policies and principles you will attempt to implement as Administrator of USFA? If so, what are they and to whom were the commitments made?

No.

5. If confirmed, are there any issues from which you may recuse or disqualify yourself because of a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest? If so, please explain what procedures you will use to carry out such a recusal or disqualification.

In connection with the nominations process, I have consulted with the U.S. Office of Government Ethics and the Department of Homeland Security's Designated Agency Ethics Official to identify and resolve any potential conflicts of interest. Potential for conflicts of interest have been identified and will be resolved in accordance with the terms of my ethics agreement, which has been provided to this Committee. No other potentials for conflicts of interest are believed to exist.

6. Have you ever been asked by an employer to leave a job or otherwise left a job on a non-voluntary basis? If so, please explain.

No.

II. Role and Responsibilities of the Administrator of the US Fire Administration

7. Why do you wish to serve as Administrator of the USFA?

I believe I can make a difference as Administrator of the USFA. Since its inception, the USFA has played a significant role in "ensuring domestic tranquility" through fire prevention, fire safety education, and enhancing America's fire service response capabilities and efficiency. The post-September 11th and Hurricane Katrina USFA has a revised role and responsibility in preparedness and response. I have been a part of the evolution of the USFA for most of its existence as a student, fire chief, and NFA board member. As a board member and vice president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, I have worked with USFA leadership to address critical issues facing the American Fire Service. If confirmed as Fire Administrator, I believe my past experiences and stakeholder

relationships will help to strengthen fire services at the local and national levels.

8. What do you see as the principal mission of the USFA?

I believe the principal mission of the USFA is to provide support to America's fire departments and fire service organizations to prevent fires, to eliminate or minimize the loss of civilian and firefighter lives when fires occur, to eliminate or minimize injuries to civilians and firefighters related to fires, and to bolster fire service preparedness for and response to natural and man-made disasters. The mission of the USFA also includes providing for the professional development of America's fire service leaders.

9. What do you see as the USFA's principal strengths and weaknesses in its ability to accomplish those mission(s)?

The USFA's most notable strength is the agency's strong ties with and support from local fire departments, fire service associations, and state fire service training institutions, and its history of collaboration with all fire service stakeholders in the planning and decision-making process which directly impacts fire service programs and operations across the country. These strengths have positioned the USFA to maximize its resources to meet the needs of its stakeholders.

USFA needs to expand its capacity to reach the American Fire Service through its professional development programs provided on campus at the National Fire Academy. In addition to expanding on-campus capacity for housing and classrooms, more methods are needed to increase field delivery capacity.

10. If confirmed, what would be your top priorities? What do you hope to have accomplished at the end of your tenure?

My top priorities will be to evaluate the impact of federal grants on fire prevention, reduce loss of life and injuries to civilians and firefighters, and strengthen local capabilities to align with national capability needs.

The fire service has benefited tremendously in recent years as the result of federal grants. One of my top priorities will be to determine the benefits of these grants on fire prevention and assess areas where further improvement is needed.

Efforts to reduce property loss and loss of civilian lives continue to improve. However the USFA needs to improve mitigation of line-of-duty deaths and

injuries to firefighters. If confirmed, developing a vulnerability assessment instrument which evaluates the potential risks for line-of-duty deaths and injuries at the local level will be a top priority for me.

I will also work to strengthen local capabilities to align with national target capabilities as defined in the National Preparedness Guidelines.

At the end of my tenure, I hope to demonstrate through measurable results that federal funds and USFA assets have been effectively and efficiently utilized,

11. If confirmed, how will you establish and maintain relationships with firefighters, EMS personnel, and other stakeholders of USFA?

If confirmed, as the head of the USFA, I will attend national, regional and state fire and EMS conferences to maintain and strengthen relationships with fire service personnel and fire service stakeholders. I will be visible on campus during fire and EMS leadership and management training programs at the National Fire Academy. In addition, I will actively participate in other fire and EMS events that warrant representation by America's chief federal fire official.

III. Policy Questions

12. What role do you believe the USFA should play within overall national efforts to enhance the essential capabilities of fire departments and emergency medical services?

The USFA should provide continued quality leadership and management training programs, which empower fire service leaders to provide effective fire defense and emergency response to their communities. USFA should continue to provide a strong curriculum for managing emergency medical services and EMS response systems. With this level of expertise fire service leaders can analyze community risks and capabilities and use local, state, and federal resources to meet community needs. From my personal experience having taken all courses in the management science and executive leadership curriculum, all the tools I needed to be an effective leader and administrator were provided through training and relationships gained over the years at the USFA's NFA.

13. How do you see USFA's mission fitting within the overall responsibilities of the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) to prepare for,

protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate against national disasters, acts of terrorism and natural disasters?

14. How do you see the demands of the fire service potentially changing in upcoming years? If confirmed as Administrator of USFA, how would you address these changes? Over your years in the fire service how have you seen demands on the fire departments evolve and how in your previous positions, including as Chief of the Atlanta and Shreveport fire departments, have you addressed evolving demands?

Over the past thirty years demands for services on local fire departments have continued to increase beyond their fire prevention and fire response capability. EMS, hazardous materials response, special rescue operations and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) response capabilities are core responsibilities of the fire service mission. In the City of Shreveport, services expanded beyond fire response as non-fire related risks to life, property and the environment increased. From the early 1980's through the new millennium I witnessed the addition of EMS, HazMat, and special operation services to our menu.

While in the City of Atlanta, the economic downturn had a significant impact on service delivery. A \$15 million budget cut led to permanent and temporary fire station closures, permanent and temporary decommissioned fire trucks, layoffs and furloughs. Fire departments across the nation are currently experiencing punishing budget cuts. Though I am confident that America will once again demonstrate her resiliency and our economy will soon become strong once again, it will take several years for fire departments to be restored to the levels of resources and services held prior to the downturn in the economy. The USFA will have to respond to this need by providing strategies for local fire chiefs to cope until revenue streams are restored and stable.

15. Please describe your management style. What is your approach to managing staff, and how has it developed during your previous management positions?

I believe my management style emphasizes the importance of sound decision-making and open communications. To get the most out of an organization, leadership must be visible, predictable, approachable, and accessible to its staff and personnel. Additionally, when leaders make decisions that impact staff and personnel, employee input and participation should be considered before a final decision is made. One of the greatest

contributors to job satisfaction is being kept informed about organization change. Access to information minimizes uncertainty.

Finally, personnel should be empowered by managers to make decisions and take actions which support and benefit stakeholders. When the chain of command or lack of formal authority negatively impacts the mission, personnel should be encouraged to take steps that increase the potential for successful outcomes. Leaders also have a responsibility for creating a work environment in which personnel look forward to coming to work every day, and to eliminate barriers that hinder personnel from giving the very best they have to offer. Eliminating favoritism, nepotism, racism, sexism, territorialism and cronyism at every organizational level plays a significant role in a positive work environment. I have applied this philosophy as Fire Chief of Shreveport, LA where I managed 620 personnel and as Fire Chief of Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, GA where I managed 1100 personnel.

16. In October 2006, USFA published a study titled, "Four Years Later – A Second Needs Assessment of the U. S. Fire Service", which reported on the results of a survey of over 4,700 fire departments. The study identified a number of training shortfalls in both career and volunteer fire departments. For example, nearly 63% of departments involved in wildland firefighting have not provided formal training in those duties in all involved personnel, and an estimated 59% of fire departments involved in technical rescue service have not provided formal training in those duties to all involved personnel.

- a. To what extent do you believe that training shortfalls of the magnitude identified in the 2006 Needs Assessment continue to exist, or do you believe that there have been improvements in this area?

I am familiar with the study. There has been tremendous improvement in increasing the number of trained and certified rescue technicians and hazardous materials technicians since 2006. Funding provided through FIRE Act and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) has contributed significantly to this increase in trained fire personnel.

- b. What role do you believe USFA can and should play in addressing training shortfalls such as those identified in the 2006 Needs Assessment?

The USFA should evaluate the findings of the 2006 report, and assess whether a follow up assessment should be conducted to determine current needs. We should then provide and/or support training programs at the state and local level that meet those needs. Additionally, the USFA should work with FIRE Act and UASI grant

administrators to address training needs that align with national preparedness and response priorities and target capabilities. Ultimately, federal grants should be used to close the gap between risks and capabilities. Training is also an integral part of this process.

17. If confirmed as USFA Administrator, you will have responsibility for overseeing the National Fire Academy. What do you see as the Academy's major challenges and how would you address them? What improvements, if any, would you seek to make in the Academy?

The fire service is currently experiencing high turnover due to retiring baby boomers and changes in pension benefits. The attrition rate is more rapid than the capacity of most fire departments to train and plan for succession. The NFA is a key part of the solution to this problem. Through its on-campus programs in Emmitsburg, off-campus programs through state and local fire training academies, and on-line training programs, the NFA provides services crucial to the future of U.S. firefighting.

In order to meet the challenge of training America's future fire officers and chief officers to effectively and efficiently manage fire and emergency operations, human resources and fire administration, the campus of the NFA must be prepared. Plans to revise relevant courses and develop new courses must be developed and implemented. Support for state and local fire training academies must also increase.

18. In many cases fire departments cannot afford to send personnel to the National Fire Academy for training for extended periods. Do you believe the USFA and the Academy are adequately addressing this issue through on-site and on-line training efforts? Are there additional steps that you believe should be taken to make training more readily accessible?

In the last three years, the NFA has worked successfully to convert many of its two-week courses into 6-day courses, thereby significantly reducing the time away from home and work without compromising the quality and content of the curriculum. Six-day courses will ultimately increase the number of participants in on campus programs while making it easier for mid and executive level chief officers to come to the Emmitsburg campus. The NFA continues to take advantage of technology by expanding its use of on-line training opportunities for fire service personnel. If confirmed, we will continue to explore all available possibilities to efficiently provide quality training to America's fire service.

19. In the post-911 world, what role do you see USFA and the National Fire Academy playing in helping prepare firefighters and other first responders for terrorist attacks, including incidents involving weapons of mass destruction. Do you believe that the training opportunities currently offered in the National Fire Academy are sufficient in addressing this need? What do you believe is the appropriate balance between such training and more traditional fire related training?

In addition to the current incident management curriculum for various types of large scale events, the NFA should develop incident courses for the scenarios identified in the NRF which are not currently addressed. The NFA should also be the lead training agency for training incident management teams across the nation. The operations and technical-based capabilities addressed through training should be provided through the training programs at the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Alabama, the Emergency Management Institute, located in Emmitsburg, and at the state and local level. The NFA should not duplicate training programs provided through these venues.

Research and Data Collection

20. USFA has partnered with public and private organizations on a number of research and development projects. For example, USFA has worked with the National Institute of Standards and Technology to evaluate the performance of thermal imaging cameras and with the Department of Transportation to find ways to better manage roadway incident scenes. In your view, where should the USFA focus future research and development projects? How can USFA continue to make effective use of partnerships in this area?

The USFA should continue to establish and build relationships with federal and non-governmental agencies whose missions are complementary to conduct research that will lead to positive outcomes that benefit stakeholders. As Fire Administrator, one of my greatest areas of focus and interest will be to establish partnerships with federal and non-governmental agencies to develop a vulnerability assessment for firefighter line of duty deaths and injuries. Additionally, the USFA must find ways to be more supportive of partnerships working to establish codes and ordinances that increase the installation of residential sprinklers.

21. USFA plays an important role in collecting and distributing data concerning the causes of fires and their consequences to firefighters, fire departments, and a number of other fire-related topics, through the National Fire Data Center (NFDC) and the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

- a. If confirmed, what will you do to improve the USFA data collection and analysis activities?

Engaging fire service stakeholders in a formal process facilitated by the USFA to assess the current system to determine if their data needs are being met is the first step toward meaningful improvement in the area of data collection and analysis. The goal of the NFDC and NFIRS should be creating a system that empowers fire chiefs with current, relevant data to analyze trends leading to effective budget decisions and strategic plans.

- b. What additional topics, if any, do you believe USFA should focus on in future surveys or other data collection activities?

Additional topics for future surveys should be identified by fire service stakeholders in a formal assessment process facilitated by the USFA. If confirmed, one of my priorities will be to engage in a dialogue with our fire service stakeholders to determine the focus of future surveys.

- c. How can USFA leverage technology to improve access to, and collection of data?

The USFA should use federal information technology resources to improve access to collection of data for its fire service customers. I am not familiar with what information technology assets are available in other federal departments or within DHS to enhance the USFA's information technology capabilities. As US Fire Administrator, my goal is to evaluate what support is available and use that support to improve data access and collections for the USFA and its fire services stakeholders.

Fire Prevention and Safety

22. One of USFA's chief responsibilities is public awareness and education. In 2008, for example, the agency began a campaign to reduce home fire caused by smoking. Other past efforts have included campaigns to

increase public awareness of arson, fire safety for babies and toddlers, and fire safety for people over 50.

- a. Are there areas or topics the USFA should focus on in future public awareness and education activities?

The target areas described in the 2008 campaign and in previous campaigns must continue in the future. Though they have made a difference, there is still a need for USFA to assert its resources in those areas. Additional campaigns should include fire safety education in multi-family and senior citizens complexes, especially those in older buildings in low to moderate income communities. These programs would focus on reducing or eliminating mass fatality fire deaths, and the USFA should partner with federal housing agencies in this effort. The USFA should also include a campaign to encourage home builders and home owners constructing new homes to install home fire sprinkler systems. Homes constructed in rural and suburban areas where fire protection is limited should be specifically targeted.

The data shows the very young (under 5 years old) and senior citizens are our most vulnerable populations. This will become even more critical as the 78 million baby-boomers (26% of our population) become seniors over the next 30-40 years. If confirmed, I plan to lead the USFA in targeting these groups with its public awareness and education campaign.

- b. Are there ways USFA could be more effective in carrying out these activities?

The USFA should use data from the NFDC to identify areas across the nation that fit the demographic of the highest risk populations for fire deaths. The NFDC should then partner with local fire departments to provide aggressive fire safety, fire prevention, and awareness programs in those areas and in multifamily and senior citizen high rise complexes. Non-competitive grants should be provided if jurisdictions with great risks lack the resources to meet needs. USFA should facilitate meaningful dialogue between fire service stakeholders, homebuilders, and homeowner associations to develop a unified strategy for home fire sprinkler installations.

23. In the past, you have spoken of the importance of firefighter safety and strengthening the “safety culture” among firefighters. What steps have you taken as a Fire Chief to address these concerns? What steps, if any, should USFA take to address them?

Firefighters’ desire to respond quickly and attack aggressively to fight and extinguish fires is the root cause of many line-of-duty deaths and injuries. This desire leads to failure to put on seat belts, excessive rates of travel, failure to stop at red lights and stop signs, overly aggressive offensive attacks and taking risks where the benefits do not warrant the effort. Besides having adequate personnel, fire apparatus, fire equipment and personal protective equipment, the greatest enhancement to transform the high risk competitive culture to a culture of safety is solid, realistic, ongoing, verifiable training at the department and company level; policies and procedures that are based in properly designed and regularly reviewed standards; a culture of accountability from the fire chief to the firefighter; and consequences for failure to train and/or follow procedures.

As Fire Chief of the City of Shreveport and the City of Atlanta, I have implemented programs and policies that conform to these principles. For years the USFA has administered training programs that teach these precepts to fire service leaders. We must monitor our records to determine if NFA courses such as Firefighter Safety and Survival, Managing Company Tactical Operations, Leadership Strategies for Company Success and Incident Management courses are being taught at a rate conducive to overcoming the high risk culture that leads to firefighter line-of-duty deaths and injuries.

Grants

24. The Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) programs provides assistance to local fire departments to enable them to obtain equipment, vehicles and training. The statutory authorization for AFG will end this year, and this Committee expects to consider legislation reauthorizing the program.

- a. What do you believe is the intent of the AFG program?

I believe the intent of the AFG program is to support the basic fire service mission of protecting and saving lives and property from the ravages of fire and other hazards. The primary goal of the program is to help fire departments and nonaffiliated EMS organizations meet their firefighting and emergency response needs. When firefighting capabilities are enhanced in all

communities across the nation, the fire service becomes a viable national asset during times of disaster.

- b. How would you assess the effectiveness of the AFG program? What improvement, if any, would you recommend making to the program?

Working with the Grant Programs Directorate at FEMA, I would like to develop an assessment process with the aid of federal partners and national fire service stakeholders to determine if fundamental capabilities are being met through AFG awards. Where gaps still exist, the program should prioritize awards to fill them. This would provide the existing, needs-based peer review evaluation with a greater degree of focus. Additionally, local fire departments should base their grant request on gaps in capabilities formally identified through community risks assessments. Information should be required in the application process that indicates the assessment has been conducted with data supporting identified gaps.

- c. Do you believe that AFG grants are distributed appropriately among volunteer, career, and combination fire departments? If not, what changes would you make in how these grants are allocated?

I have not had the benefit of reviewing data relative to the distribution of AFG awards to volunteer, career and combination departments. As I understand it, distribution of awards to the various departments is governed by the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974, as amended. All categories of fire departments mentioned have needs which are being met through the AFG program. If there are fire departments at this point that do not have adequate personal protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus, efforts should be made to address that need. I believe the credibility of AFG awards distribution relies on addressing needs aligned with fundamental firefighting capabilities, which support national preparedness priorities and target capabilities as well. To that end, all fire departments (regardless of type) should benefit from the AFG program commensurate with local needs and national preparedness goals.

- d. In 2007, the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), at the request of DHS conducted a study assessing the performance

of the AFG program. Are you familiar with the NAPA study? If so, what do you think of its conclusions?

I do remember reading an executive summary of the study produced by the IAFC, but do not recall the details of its conclusions. As US Fire Administrator, I would engage in a thorough review of the report and its conclusion and where appropriate, initiate actions necessary to strengthen the viability of the AFG to build support for its continued reauthorization and funding.

25. While the President's budget proposed doubling the amount of funding for Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants, which assist fire departments with hiring new personnel, it would have also slashed funding for AFG grants nearly 70%. The FY 2010 DHS appropriations bills passed by the House and Senate each restored some of the funding for AFG, but the AFG funding included in each of these bills is still \$175 million—or 31%—less than was appropriated for AFG in FY 2009. Do you believe that the proposed funding for AFG is adequate? Why or why not?

I believe that the Administration's budget request prioritized the SAFER hiring/volunteer recruitment due to the economic downturn and the need to focus on job creation. I understand that Congress has already waived the local matching requirement for SAFER for FY2009 and FY2010, which will make this valuable program accessible to all communities for the next several years. If confirmed, I will work with Congress and appropriate Administration officials to evaluate both the AFG and SAFER program funding levels that may be necessary in future years

26. What improvements, if any do you believe should be made to the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program?

The SAFER grant program is outstanding and will provide local fire departments the resources needed to achieve the goal of having enough firefighters on an incident scene to effectively save lives and reduce property damage, while simultaneously reducing workloads which contribute to firefighter injuries and line of duty deaths.

27. How do you see USFA and the fire service more generally fitting into the National Preparedness System? Do you believe that fire fighting and fire prevention capabilities are adequately incorporated into national preparedness efforts and the documents that support those efforts, including the National Planning Scenarios and the Target Capabilities List?

Federal funds allocated to fire departments support the firefighting and special operations needs of the National Preparedness System.

I believe the firefighting and fire prevention capabilities are adequately incorporated. The USFA should be supported by DHS as the primary federal agency to assure appropriate consideration is given to the fire service as a federal asset for purposes of planning, preparedness, and response, recovery and mitigation efforts.

28. The National Response Framework's Emergency Support Function 4 (ESF-4) addressing firefighting and provides a framework for "Federal support for the detection and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires resulting or occurring coincidentally with, an incident requiring a coordinated Federal response for assistance."

- a. The U. S. Forest Service is the coordinating agency for ESF-4. What do you see as the USFA's role under this ESF? How will USFA coordinate with the Forest Service and other agencies with responsibilities under ESF-4 to ensure that federal support for firefighting can be effectively carried out during a disaster?

The USFA should be a significant partner with the Forest Service in ESF-4. This partnership is especially vital during non-wildland fire incidents. The incident management team for ESF-4 at the federal level should include USFA staff and, as necessary, other fire service leaders with expertise in special operations involving urban search and rescue and hazardous materials CBRNE incidents. Since the American Fire Service will be utilized as a national asset, it is important for the nation to demonstrate the unified leadership of the USFS and the USFA at the incident management level.

- b. Do you believe any improvements or modifications to the ESF-4 are necessary? What additional steps, if any, do you think USFA should undertake to ensure that it is able to carry out its responsibilities under this ESF?

If there are any barriers that currently prevent the aforementioned partnership arrangement from formally existing, those barriers should be removed. Training, exercises and wildland fires provide opportunities to strengthen the effectiveness of a USFS and USFA ESF-4. If confirmed, I will work

¹to identify any necessary improvements to the execution of ESF-4 and implement appropriate solutions.

Other Issues

29. According to a series of articles in the Atlanta Journal Constitution, the Atlanta Fire Department earlier this year faced staffing shortages because of a combination of budget-related furloughs, resignations, abolition of positions, unusually high numbers of firefighters calling in sick, the absence of overtime, and a hiring freeze. On at least two occasions, as Atlanta Fire Chief, you were reported to have implemented “brownouts” in which some fire stations were closed because of inadequate staffing, and you were quoted on at least one occasion as saying you were “concerned because we do not have an adequate staffing level”, and, on another, as warning that the city had reached “an extreme level of vulnerability.”

- a. Please describe the budget and staffing shortages that occurred in the Atlanta Fire Department earlier this year and how you addressed those challenges?

The Atlanta Fire Rescue Department experienced a \$15 million budget reduction in an effort to compensate for a \$140 million revenue shortfall in FY 2009. All vacant funded positions were abolished; two divisions of labor were combined—resulting in demotions from deputy chief to fire apparatus drivers and subsequent firefighter layoffs; four 24-hour shifts of paid overtime for firefighters to increase staffing were eliminated; Fire Station 7 was permanently closed; Heavy Rescue Squad 4 was decommissioned; overtime was eliminated; a six month hiring freeze was imposed; and all members were on furloughs with a 10% reduction in work weeks and salaries. Clearly these were tough decisions made through strict adherence to a previously established mission statement, organizational priorities, and decision making priorities. I collaborated with the executive and senior management team

¹ See, e.g., “Union says furloughs, not firefighters, at fault,” February 3, 2009, p. 1C and http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/printedition/2009/02/03/atlantafire0203.html?cxntlid=inform_artr; “Atlanta firefighting shortage eases a bit,” February 16, <http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/printedition/2009/02/16/fire0216.html>; and “Firefighters’ exodus from Atlanta contributes to stations closing,” February 24, 2009, http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/atlanta/stories/2009/02/24/atlanta_fire_station.html.

through a series of budget workshops and, as appropriate, included labor organizations in the decision making process.

As a result of these budget reduction initiatives, we did not have enough firefighters to staff all remaining fire stations and fire trucks. When annual leave and sick leave were at their peak, temporary closures of fire trucks, commonly referred to as brownouts, were necessary. On some days, brownouts would result in the temporarily closure of six fire stations, creating significant gaps in coverage in the City of Atlanta. On those days we were extremely vulnerable. The closure of fire stations could have negatively impacted our ability to protect and save life and property. We were fortunate that no major incident occurred during this time.

- b. Has the staffing situation in the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department improved from the situation reported in February?

The staffing situation has improved. The hiring freeze has been lifted and furloughs have ended. Eliminating furloughs resulted in reopening Fire Station 23 and placing Truck 12 back in service. Twenty-four additional firefighters have returned to daily staffing and a basic training recruit academy has begun. Plans are currently underway to begin additional recruit academies to fill all vacancies as quickly as possible.

- c. What lessons have you taken from dealing with these difficulties that you believe are relevant to challenges you will face as USFA Administrator, if confirmed?

I have learned many lessons from leading and managing the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department during tough times. Defining mission and establishing organizational and decision making priorities are essential in making tough decisions and maintaining organizational unity during tough times. A committed executive and senior management team that believes in and support those principles and are included in the decision making process makes a big difference. Keeping personnel informed with frequent quality information eliminates uncertainty, frustration and ambiguity and reduces the negative impact of the rumor mill.

Being visible and accessible in fire stations and other organizational units, attending neighborhood association and community meetings to address concerns and justify decisions

and being accessible and straight forward with the media and elected officials are crucial components of communication during tough times. These same strategies can be used by the US Fire Administrator.

30. As chief of Shreveport, LA Fire Department you led the department efforts to assist the New Orleans Fire Department in its response to Hurricane Katrina. You noted that one of the biggest issues you dealt with was the "territorialism that existed between state, local and federal levels." What steps did you take to address the problem? If confirmed, what will you do as USFA Administrator to reduce such "territorialism"?

The territorialism that existed during Hurricane Katrina was directly associated with historic culture and barriers between local, state and federal government; the lack of incident management cooperation and coordination necessary to mitigate a disaster of this magnitude; and lack of familiarity with the then newly developed National Response Plan. Unfortunately, elected and appointed officials did not demonstrate knowledge and skills of emergency and incident management that the public rightfully expected them to have. Inadequate relationships between fire, law enforcement and emergency management agencies hindered effective coordination and cooperation.

In northwest Louisiana, I was a part of a unified effort between multiple agencies of Caddo and Bossier Parish that took a different approach from most of the state. For years, our annual exercises had been building relationships between public safety and emergency management agencies to support a unified approach to incident management. Prior to Katrina, we worked collectively to integrate the National Response Plan and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) into our emergency response plan. As a result, we developed a unified command structure that supported operations in south Louisiana, while simultaneously caring for the shelter and human needs of evacuees in our region.

We have come a long way since Hurricane Katrina. Many of the barriers that caused territorialism have been eliminated. Immediately following the rescue phase of Hurricane Katrina, as President of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association, I authored a position paper titled, "America's Response to Hurricane Katrina—The First Great Test of the Department of Homeland Security." Many of the lessons learned and recommendations made have been implemented. We have a new NRF. FEMA and USFA are integrated into DHS, and NIMS training is widely dispersed into all disciplines at the federal, state and local levels.

31. The approximately 1.15 million members of the nations' fire service comprise both career firefighters and volunteer, and they work for fire departments that may be all career, all volunteer or a combination of both. What do you see as the differing needs of career and volunteer fire departments and, if confirmed, what will you do to support each of these essential parts of the fire service?

One of the greatest needs of both career and volunteer fire departments is having enough firefighters to staff fire apparatus on a daily basis, and having enough firefighters on the emergency scene to minimize risks of line of duty deaths and injuries. As such, recruitment and retention will continue to be a significant issue for volunteer departments. Volunteer firefighters have less time available due to demands on their time from jobs necessary to take care of their families. Career departments are experiencing layoffs and hiring freezes at the same time as rates of attrition are increasing as baby boomers retire resulting in vacancies that may not be filled.

The challenge of acquiring and retaining a sufficient number of committed volunteers could cause some all-volunteer and combination fire departments to compromise on standards in order to have enough volunteers. These departments will face an enormous dilemma between maintaining training and safety requirements and relaxing those requirements in order to accommodate time constraints of volunteers.

The USFA should continue to provide programs to address the challenges of volunteer, combination and career fire departments. The USFA should engage our fire service partners and stakeholders to make sure we are pulling out all the stops to meet their needs.

32. Over the past several years, wildland fires have become an increasing problem. In 2008, for example, the International Code Council issued a report showing that 2007 was the most severe and expensive wildland fire season on record and noted that 5 of the 10 worst seasons in terms of acres burned have occurred in the last eight years.

- a. What role, if any, should the USFA play in addressing this issue?

From my understanding, the USFA has a key role in the coordinating wildfires. USFA is a member of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and its oversight group, the Federal Executive Committee (FEC). As members of the

NWCG, FEC and other wildfire coordinating groups, USFA maintains a leadership role within the federal government in the coordination of how wildfires are fought throughout the United States.

Aside from its coordinating role in these committees, USFA also maintains a staff member at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, ID. The center provides unified guidance and guidelines for fire agencies who respond to wildfires in the United States. Although NIFC was founded to manage firefighting resources throughout the western states, the center is now designated as an "all-hazard" co-ordination center and provides support in response to other emergencies such as floods, hurricanes and earthquakes for the entire United States.

- b. Do you see opportunities for coordination with other agencies, such as the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior?

To make the most of federal level resources, I believe there should be ongoing assessments of opportunities to complement like missions, combine resources to benefit outcomes and eliminate duplication. As US Fire Administrator, I will seek to engage USFS and the Department of Interior and other agencies to enhance our collective value to the nation.

33. As you know, wildland/urban interface fires continue to be a challenge with which communities across the nation are struggling. What do you believe the Federal government can do to assist state and local governments with this problem?

I believe the Federal government should formally engage all federal agencies and non-governmental stakeholders who have expertise and resources to effectively evaluate the best approach to prevention of wildland/urban interface fires.

34. What do you see as USFA's role in supporting fire-based and nonaffiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations? If confirmed, what will you do to strengthen USFA's support for EMS? How do you intend to work with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and other federal agencies that also have EMS-related responsibilities?

The USFA does and will continue to provide a quality curriculum for the administration and management of EMS. In most communities, the infrastructure for fire protection and the emergency response and life safety rescue culture of the fire service, positions the local fire department to be the most reliable source of emergency medical services from a first response Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support and emergency transportation perspective. Communities that lack the infrastructure or capacity to build and provide EMS services will continue to rely on other options for EMS. The USFA should support the needs of fire departments in addressing the infrastructure and capacity challenges in their community. USFA should work in cooperation with all federal agencies who have EMS related responsibilities to make the most of federal expertise and resources.

IV. Relations with Congress

35. Do you agree, without reservation, to respond to any reasonable summons to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Congress if you are confirmed?

Yes.

36. Do you agree, without reservation, to reply to any reasonable request for information from any duly constituted committee of the Congress if you are confirmed?

Yes.

37. Are these answers your own? Have you consulted with DHS or any interested parties? If so, please indicate which entities.

Yes, the answers are mine. I have received routine pre-confirmation briefings from the White House, DHS and FEMA that have helped me develop responses to these questions.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Kelvin J. Cochran, being duly sworn, hereby state that I have read and signed the foregoing Statement on Pre-hearing Questions and that the information provided therein is, to the best of my knowledge, current, accurate, and complete.

Kelvin J. Cochran

Subscribed and sworn before me this 31st day of July, 2009.

Jared Vincent Ferris

Notary Public

Jared Vincent Ferris
Notary Public, District of Columbia
My Commission Expires 12-14-2009





United States
Office of Government Ethics
1201 New York Avenue, NW., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005-3917

July 31, 2009

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, I enclose a copy of the financial disclosure report filed by Kelvin J. Cochran, who has been nominated by President Obama for the position of U.S. Fire Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

We have reviewed the report and have also obtained advice from the agency concerning any possible conflict in light of its functions and the nominee's proposed duties. Also enclosed is an ethics agreement outlining the actions that the nominee will undertake to avoid conflicts of interest. Unless a date for compliance is indicated in the ethics agreement, the nominee must fully comply within three months of confirmation with any action specified in the ethics agreement.

Based thereon, we believe that this nominee is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

Sincerely,

Robert I. Cusick
Director

Enclosures - REDACTED



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS

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July 17, 2009

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the nearly 13,000 chief fire and emergency officers of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I strongly endorse the nomination of Chief Kelvin J. Cochran to be the United States Fire Administrator. The IAFC urges the U.S. Senate to quickly confirm Chief Cochran to this position.

Chief Cochran is an experienced fire chief and emergency manager with 27 years of experience in responding to all hazards. Currently, Chief Cochran serves as the fire chief of the 1,045-member Atlanta, Georgia, Fire Rescue Department. He is responsible for coordinating homeland security and emergency preparedness initiatives between the city of Atlanta and the Atlanta Fulton County Emergency Management Agency, while also ensuring that the residents of Atlanta receive first-class fire and emergency medical response protection. Previous to his position as Atlanta's fire chief, Chief Cochran served for many years with the fire department of Shreveport, Louisiana, a career which started as a firefighter and culminated with his appointment as fire chief in 1999. Chief Cochran is well-respected by America's first responders, has given many lectures on leadership and emergency response, and has served as the president of the Metropolitan Fire Chiefs Association and first vice president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Chief Cochran is an expert in the field of emergency management, and understands the role that FEMA plays with other federal, state, and local governments in ensuring effective mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery operations. As Shreveport's fire chief, he organized the city's response to Hurricane Katrina and its sheltering of evacuees from New Orleans and other areas affected by that storm. During the Hurricane Katrina recovery operations, he served on a team that developed the strategic plan to rebuild the New Orleans Fire Department. In addition, he is familiar with federal grant programs, such as the Assistance to Firefighters and SAFER grant programs, the Urban Areas Security Initiative grant program, and the Homeland Security Grant Program.

As the nation's premier fire and emergency services leadership organization, the IAFC is proud to strongly endorse Chief Cochran's nomination. We urge the committee to schedule his confirmation hearing soon, and would like to work with you to ensure his full Senate confirmation.

Sincerely,

Chief Larry Grorud, CFO, MIFireE
President



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS®

HAROLD A. SCHAITBERGER
General President

VINCENT J. BOLLON
General Secretary-Treasurer

August 4, 2009

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

On behalf of the nation's nearly 300,000 professional fire fighters and emergency medical personnel, I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Chief Kelvin J. Cochran as U.S. Fire Administrator.

With over 28 years in the fire service, Chief Cochran's depth and breadth of experience is truly impressive. Having worked his way up through the ranks of the Shreveport, Louisiana Fire Department from Fire Fighter to Fire Chief, Cochran became a passionate advocate for fire fighter health and safety. During his tenure as Chief, the Department experienced no major injuries or line-of-duty deaths.

Chief Cochran's willingness to advocate for the personnel under his leadership earned him the respect and admiration of IAFF members in both Shreveport and later upon becoming Chief of the Atlanta, Georgia Fire Department. Chief Cochran's experience, understanding of emergency operations at all levels, and inclusive approach to management make him uniquely qualified for the position of U.S. Fire Administrator.

Thank you for your consideration of our views and for your continued leadership on behalf of the nation's fire and emergency services.

Sincerely,

Harold A. Schaitberger
General President



**National Fire Protection Association**

1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471
Phone: 617-770-3000 • Fax: 617-770-0700 • www.nfpa.org

August 3, 2009

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

I am writing to express my strong support for the confirmation of Chief Kelvin James Cochran, as U.S. Fire Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

NFPA works closely with the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) to confront the challenges facing America's fire service and other emergency responders. As we all know, today's fire service must be prepared to contend with a full range of ordinary and extraordinary hazards.

Chief Cochran has been an active leader of the fire service and worked tirelessly for many years to advance fire safety. His demonstrated dedication and expertise will serve the nation well.

On behalf of NFPA, I want to thank you for all that you have done to make America more secure and renew our commitment to assist you in those efforts whenever possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.M. Shannon', is written over the typed name and title.

James M. Shannon
President



7852 Walker Drive, Suite 450, Greenbelt, MD 20770

August 6, 2009

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman
Chairman
Senate Homeland Security and
Government Affairs Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Ranking Member
Senate Homeland Security and
Government Affairs Committee
Washington, DC 20510

NVFC
202.887.5700
888.ASK.NVFC
888.275.6832
202.887.5291 fax

Dear Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins:

I am writing to express the support of the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) for the nomination of Chief Kelvin J. Cochran to be the next Administrator of the United States Fire Administration (USFA). As demonstrated by his rise through the ranks to become Chief of the Shreveport Fire Department before being hired last year to be Chief of the Atlanta Fire Department, Chief Cochran is a talented, capable individual who possesses a wealth of fire service knowledge and experience.

NVFC
HEART-HEALTHY
FIREFIGHTER
PROGRAM
202.887.5700
202.887.5291 fax

Although Chief Cochran has worked exclusively in career fire departments, I was pleased to learn at his confirmation hearing that one of his first orders of business upon assuming the office of Administrator will be to reach out to national organizations representing volunteer firefighters, including the NVFC, to ensure that under his watch USFA continues to be responsive to the needs of the volunteer fire service. I also believe that Chief Cochran was sincere when he expressed his belief – which I share – in the importance of fostering positive working relationships between the career and volunteer fire services.

FIRE CORPS
888.FC.INFO1
202.887.4809
202.887.5291 fax

I would also like to express my support for the confirmation timeline that both of you referenced in yesterday's hearing. USFA has been without an appointed Administrator for the past seven months and it is important that Chief Cochran be confirmed before the Senate goes into recess for the month of August so that he can assume his new responsibilities as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the NVFC's support for Chief Cochran's nomination. If you have any questions, please contact Director of Government Relations Dave Finger at (202) 887-5700, ext. 12, or dfinger@nvfc.org.

Sincerely,

Philip C. Stittleburg
Chairman

Senator Tom Coburn
Additional Questions for the Record
Nomination Hearing of Kelvin Cochran
August 5, 2009

1. The vast majority of disasters states face are natural disasters such as forest fires and tornados. Do you think it is a federal responsibility to help states and local communities prepare for and respond to disasters such as fires?

I believe it is the role of the federal government to provide a solid foundation for local emergency services to respond to all types of disasters. Programs such as the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) Program allow departments to meet the basic needs to provide competent, safe response within their communities. Education, such as is provided by the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Academy, provides fire and emergency services leaders the training to better respond to all types of disasters within their jurisdictions. These types of programs are essential to ensuring a unified approach to responding to all types of emergencies, no matter what size.

2. The 9/11 Commission warned in its report that homeland security grants were in danger of becoming pork-barrel funding. While federal spending on homeland security has increased exponentially since 9/11, state spending on homeland security has remained almost flat as a percentage of total state appropriations. Studies suggest that this trend may indicate a more dangerous practice of federal grants supplanting State and local spending on functions that are inherently state and local functions.
 - a. Are you concerned that State and local fire departments are becoming dependent on this federal cash flow?

While it is true that State spending on homeland security funding has remained relatively flat, it is important to recognize the important roll the Federal government has in ensuring that all first responders across the country have adequate response capabilities. Federal grants for state and local departments largely go towards funding homeland security functions that were not the primary focus of State and local communities prior to 9/11. Furthermore, FEMA is encouraging States to share the burden of homeland security costs.

- b. Are we federalizing our local law enforcement and fire fighters?

There is no evidence to suggest that Homeland Security grant funding is leading the federalization of local law enforcement and fire fighters. Rather, homeland security funding has been used to improve the overall capabilities of our nation's first responders through additional planning, training, equipment, and exercises.

3. In a June 23rd Heritage Foundation WebMemo,¹ they asks the question “Do fire grants reduce or prevent injuries and deaths to firefighters and civilians?” The findings of their report conclude that “fire grants, including grants that subsidize the salaries of firefighters, had no impact on fire casualties.”

- a. Is one of the primary responsibilities of firefighting to prevent and reduce fire related casualties?

Yes, there is no question that an essential purpose of the fire service is to prevent and reduce fire related injuries, losses, and casualties.

- b. If the findings in this report are true, should Congress fund fire grants?

I understand that the Heritage report states that AFG grants failed to reduce fire casualties. However, my understanding is that the findings of this report are contrary to the AFG’s analysis of application and award data conducted in the course of performance measure reporting for the Office of Budget and Management’s (OMB) Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART), as well as DHS’ Fiscal Year Homeland Security Program (FYHSP).

If confirmed, I will work with the Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) at FEMA, who are responsible for administering and managing the AFG Program, and engage in a thorough review of the program to ensure that funds are going to those fire departments with the most need. Additionally, I will review the Heritage Report with the officials at GPD to ensure that the AFG Program is truly making the difference it was intended to make.

- c. Please give me your thoughts on this report.

I can personally attest to the importance of the AFG Program. While serving as Fire Chief in the City of Shreveport, we were fortunate enough to receive several AFG grants. These funds helped to provide our department with essential pieces of equipment that assisted in our mission to save lives and reduce loss of property. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that AFG funds are being spent in an effective manner, and that the dollars are addressing the needs of fire departments.

¹ Muhlhausen, David, WebMemo #2499 “Do DHS Fire Grants Reduce Fire Casualties”, June 23, 2009, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Economy/wm2499.cfm>.

**Senator George V. Voinovich
Additional Questions for the Record
Nomination Hearing of Kelvin Cochran
August 5, 2009**

1. Mr. Cochran, the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate currently operates the Regional Technology Integration Initiative to facilitate the transition of technologies and organizational concepts to regional, state, and local jurisdictions. Officials at DHS have told me that this initiative is successful and is allowing for a variety of tests, such as work being done in the Cincinnati Urban Area to develop and test tools and technologies for first responders, including a 3-D locator system that allows incident commanders to track the positioning and status of first responders on a real-time basis and a simulation-based training system for fire fighters. If confirmed, how would you work with the Science and Technology Directorate to utilize and build upon this work for the U.S. Fire Administration?

One of the primary missions of the United States Fire Administration (USFA) involves research and technology. Currently, USFA works with DHS' Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) on a number of projects, including lighter self-contained breathing apparatus, health monitoring devices, and 3-D locators for firefighters to use when on-scene of a fire. USFA currently issues reports on each of these new technologies and has staff dedicated to act as a liaison between the two organizations. If confirmed, I pledge to continue this partnership with S&T on these and all emerging technologies that may assist the men and women of America's fire service.

If confirmed, reducing firefighter line of duty deaths will be one of my main goals. Making sure new and emerging technologies are disseminated to the fire service will assist in achieving that goal.

2. Mr. Cochran, during major disasters, local jurisdictions can often count on assistance from neighboring states who supply critical resources, including firefighters and emergency medical personnel. Our nation witnessed examples of both during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. One of the major impediments to their ability to quickly respond is something largely beyond their control – the unfamiliarity of first responders with distant jurisdictions and the location of hospitals, fire and police stations. Access to such information and an understanding of local terrain might significantly improve first responder reaction time as well as the efficiency with which they provide their services.
 - a. In your opinion, is there a need at the first responder level for access to geospatial data and information which would supply the locations of critical infrastructure, such as hospitals and neighboring fire stations?

In my opinion, data and information of critical infrastructure, such as hospitals and neighboring fire stations, are critical. These data points will better assist mutual aid companies from other jurisdictions to better respond to emergencies.

- b. Do you think emergency managers and first responders might benefit from advanced and consistent access to such data, and, if so, how?

Emergency managers and all first responders would benefit from having this information. This is an issue which needs to be addressed at the local level through not only the emergency services, but other authorities such as water, electric and other public works entities. With well laid out maps of jurisdictions, all responders can have access to data, such as where fire hydrants are located, where electrical junctions are placed, and other locations of critical infrastructure. Many jurisdictions have placed GPS devices on their vehicles (police, fire, etc.), which tie into geospatial maps allowing computer dispatch systems to send the closest resource to an emergency scene, cutting down on response times.

**Senator Mark Pryor
Additional Questions for the Record
Nomination Hearing of Kelvin Cochran
August 5, 2009**

1. I am concerned by the high number of fire related losses and incidents in this country, and the U.S. Fire Administration is tasked with national fire preparedness and prevention activities to mitigate this risk. I believe it is important to have appropriate fire safety standards for products to protect the safety of consumers, workers and first responders. If confirmed, how will you partner with entities that issue fire safety standards on products, such as the National Fire Protection Association or Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., regarding modifications to current standards or the issuing of standards on products?

The US Fire Administration has a track record of partnering with NFPA, UL, NIST and other agencies on developing new products and technology and enhancing existing products to improve fire and life safety standards for American citizens, firefighters and to improve business and work practices. As Fire Administrator, I will evaluate the depth and quality of our participation and continue to provide meaning support and participation in these endeavors in the future.

Senator Mary Landrieu
Additional Questions for the Record
Nomination Hearing of Kelvin Cochran
August 5, 2009

1. Twenty eight urban Search and Rescue teams across the nation receive federal funds for training, equipment, and exercises. These teams primarily consist of skilled firefighters who can deploy to an incident site and provide immediate response capabilities. There are very few federal teams in the Southeast U.S., and the closest one to Louisiana is based in College Station, TX and takes about 16 hours to deploy to the state. The State of Louisiana recently established 3 teams in New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport, but they are not part of the federal system. The FY09 Homeland Security Appropriations bill required FEMA to evaluate the number and location of teams and report to Congress whether additional teams should be established in specific regions. That report is now overdue.

What is your assessment of FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue program, do you think the current network of federal teams is sufficient, and if not how would you address any shortcomings in the system that exist?

A FEMA Report entitled "Feasibility of Additional Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces--Fiscal Year 2009 Report to Congress" was signed by the FEMA Administrator and transmitted to the Hill on June 30, 2009. FEMA's recommendation in that report, based on historical response occurrence and current funding levels, is to maintain the National US&R Response System at the existing level of 28 Task Forces. FEMA has determined that the 28 Task Forces with ongoing and sustained enhancements have the capacity and capability to meet the urban search and rescue needs of our country for emergencies and major disasters declared under the Stafford Act. Increasing their number would only dilute the available funding and impede ongoing enhancement efforts.

It should be noted that there are additional programs that allow states to procure search and rescue capabilities. Many states have expressed an interest in enhancing their statewide search and rescue capabilities, and they are encouraged to apply for funding through their State Emergency Management Offices or FEMA's grant programs, including the Urban Area Security Initiative. The National US&R Program Office strongly encourages the 28 National US&R Task Forces to share their expertise to interact, train and exercise with state, regional or local-level search and rescue teams. In keeping with this theme, the National US&R Program Office continually shares training materials and operational manuals with state partners for their use and training.

FEMA's National US&R Response System has been a valuable national disaster response asset/resource for the past 18 years, and its importance is reinforced after every event. FEMA will continue to coordinate closely with the Sponsoring Agencies of the 28 Task Forces to ensure the operational effectiveness of the National US&R Response System.

2. During the response to a major disaster, local fire stations usually keep as many personnel on duty as possible to handle the increased demand for services. The Fair Labor Standards Act requires them to pay those firefighters during the entire period that they're on duty. The Stafford Act authorizes reimbursement for first responders' overtime pay during a disaster, but the agency's current policy will only cover 24-hour work periods for the first 2 days of a disaster. After that, FEMA policy operates on the assumption that no one is working more than 16-hour days so it caps overtime reimbursement at 8 hours/per day. In small communities that don't have enough firefighters to rotate staff during a catastrophe, they must work almost nonstop and sometimes for weeks.

Chief Paulison understood the problem with this policy and agreed to extend the 24-hour reimbursement timeframe from 2 to 14 days after meeting with local firefighters who responded to Katrina but were denied a fair reimbursement. For some inexplicable reason though, FEMA decided to apply that policy change only to Katrina. So now, the very same firefighters from Jefferson Parish who went with my staff from this committee to Dave Paulison's office to resolve this issue, are going through the same headaches all over again as they try to figure out a way to cover their payroll expenses from the overtime their firefighters worked during the response to Gustav and Ike.

- a. Are you familiar with the conflicting standards between the Fair Labor Standards Act and FEMA's policy on reimbursement for "force account labor" after a disaster?

I am not familiar with this conflicting policy, but feel it must be reviewed to establish a policy that does not change from one disaster to another. A clearly defined policy at the federal level will resolve any uncertainty on this issue. As Fire Administrator I will work with FEMA Administrator Fugate to develop such a policy.

- b. Do you believe FEMA has the authority to resolve this inconsistency administratively?

I am not familiar with the legal boundaries of which FEMA can or cannot address this issue.

- c. Will you work with the fire chiefs in Louisiana, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and officials at FEMA to find a sensible solution to this problem?

I am wholeheartedly committed to working with the Louisiana Fire Chief's Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs and FEMA to find a solution to this issue.

3. What are your top 3 priorities for the U.S. Fire Administration?

My top three priorities as U.S. Fire Administrator are to: enhance fire and life safety training and public education initiatives to continue the downturn in loss of lives and injuries to citizens and the loss of property due to fires; develop and implement an aggressive plan to reduce line of duty deaths and injuries to firefighters; and evaluate federal grants administered to fire departments to determine if critical needs are being met, identify areas of improvement, assure federal grants are ultimately leading to enhancing local capabilities based on community risks, but also support capabilities of the fire service discipline in the National Response Framework.