March 28, 2022

The Honorable Ash Kalra  
Chair, Assembly Committee of Labor and Employment  
State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814  

RE: AB 1993 (Wicks) – Employment: COVID-19 vaccination requirements. (OPPOSE)

Chair Kalra,

On behalf of over 30,000 fire fighters and emergency medical professionals in the great state of California, we urge you to vote NO on AB 1993.

While the effort to protect our members is admirable, AB1993 and its statewide vaccine mandate is not the appropriate method to accomplish that goal. Fire fighters in California have a long history of collectively bargaining important issues that affect their health and safety – vaccination status should be no different.

Fire fighters and emergency medical professionals have been on the front lines throughout this pandemic and have successfully met with their employers to have good faith discussions on COVID policies and solutions.

This measure also would ignore and even override the agreements that employees and employers reached collaboratively when it comes to vaccination requirements. Actions like this from the statehouse threaten the foundation of bargaining and have the potential to not only impact this issue, but every other issue that is discussed between fire fighters and their fire departments as well as all employee-employer relationships, setting our state back generations when it comes to labor relations.

The IAFF has been consistent from the onset of the pandemic two years ago when it comes to encouraging our members to get vaccinated. We strongly encourage all members to get vaccinated and to talk with their primary care physician regarding the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine. But we also believe that state and local governments should work with our affiliates to negotiate or meet and confer over vaccine mandates and testing procedures. Continued outreach and education, not forced mandates, have been successful in improving vaccination rates. AB 1993 is unnecessary.

We request that you vote NO on AB 1993.

Sincerely,

Edward A. Kelly  
General President

Frank V. Lima  
General Secretary-Treasurer