

NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO

106 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608
(609) 989-8730
FAX (609) 989-8734
www.njafclcio.org

CHARLES WOWKANECH
PRESIDENT

LAUREL BRENNAN
SECRETARY-TREASURER

CHARLES H. MARCIANTE
PRESIDENT EMERITUS



EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

JOYCE ALSTON	THOMAS GIBLIN	JOHN T. NICCOLLA, JR.	JOHN SHINN
THOMAS ASHTON	RAYMOND GREAVES	GERALD OWENS	JOSEPH SORESI
MICHAEL BARNES	CHARLES HALL, JR.	DEBBIE PARKS	RICHARD SWEENEY
KAREN BELLAMY LEWIS	VINCENT LANE	STEPHEN F. PETTIT	BUDDY THOMAN
JAMES R. CHEW, JR.	MICHAEL MALONEY	RAYMOND POCINO	RICHARD TOLSON
NOEL CHRISTMAS	DOMINICK MARINO	JOHN POTTS	STEVEN M. TULLY
JOSEPH DEMARK, JR.	MATTHEW McCARTY	HETTY ROSENSTEIN	ANN TWOMEY
WATT EARP	C. ROBERT McDEVITT	TIMOTHY RUDOLPH	HARVEY WHILLE
SHARON EASTWICK	JAMES McMANUS, JR.	RONALD E. SABOL	
LYNNE P. FOX	JUAN NEGRON	DAVID SCHNECK	

November 29, 2018

Dear Members of the New Jersey State Legislature:

RE: Please Support S-2539 (Ruiz) & A-3974 (Quijano) – Requires Fire Suppression Systems in New Single & Two Family Homes

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO, on behalf of our affiliate Sprinklerfitters Local 696, respectfully ask for your support of the above referenced legislation. Every year, New Jersey averages over 15,000 structure fires with approximately 80% of them occurring in one or two family dwellings. The total damage to property and contents due to fire in residential structures hovers around \$50 million annually. Combined with the cost associated with medical and burn treatment for those injured in a home fire as well as the costs associated with relocation, families experience significant yet an unnecessary financial burden due to fire¹.

The emotional toll taken on those who have been injured or have lost a loved one in a residential fire is far greater than numbers can measure. According to data collected by U.S. Fire Administration, this year alone 26 individuals in New Jersey – some of them children – have lost their lives in a residential fire². Meanwhile, research shows that installing fire sprinklers in residential structures both saves lives and protects property for less than the price of a daily cup of coffee (on average, \$4,000 over the life of a 30-year mortgage). In fact, California, Maryland, and the District of Columbia have all required fire sprinklers in all one- and two- family homes, while 17 other states have counties or municipalities with fire sprinkler ordinances. In addition, the International Residential Code – which creates minimum regulations for residential structures – has long recommended that one and two family homes be constructed with fire sprinklers.

The threat of fire is greater than ever before. As furniture and other home goods are increasingly manufactured with highly flammable materials, and homes are continually built closer and closer together, the speed at which the contents of an average home burns is dangerously fast. New Jersey has the opportunity to join other states in preventing the loss of life and property associated with fire. I hope you will join us in supporting **A-3974 / S-2539**.

Sincerely,

Charles Wowkanech
President

Laurel Brennan
Secretary-Treasurer

CW:LB:jd
OPEIU:153

¹ file:///C:/Users/kuras/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/OI7EQ4G6/fire_in_nj_2015.pdf

² <https://bit.ly/2HOcVUo>