

James Nolan

Minority Whip
Legislator, 15th District



To: Vedat Gashi, Chairwoman of the Board of Legislators
Sunday Vanderberg, Clerk of the Board of Legislators
Colin Smith, Chair of the Legislation Committee
Terry Clemens, Chair of the Public Safety Committee

From: James Nolan, Legislator, District 15, Jose Alvarado, Legislator, District 17, David Tubiolo, Legislator, District 14, Shanae Williams, Legislator, District 16

Date: April 3, 2024

Re: *Recognition of Public Works Professionals as First Responders*

Attached is a legislative resolution in Support of Recognition of Public Work Professionals as First Responders.

Please refer to the Legislation Committee and the Public Safety Committee

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RECOGNITION OF PUBLIC WORKS
PROFESSIONALS AS FIRST RESPONDERS IN NEW YORK STATE

WHEREAS, POLICE, FIRE, AND EMS ARE OFTEN THE THREE MOST RECOGNIZED FIRST RESPONDERS, PUBLIC WORKS IS ALSO OFTEN SILENTLY THERE—PROVIDING VITAL SUPPORT TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE PARTNERS, HELPING PROTECT ESSENTIAL SERVICES, AND RESTORING THOSE SERVICES FOLLOWING AN EMERGENCY; AND

WHEREAS, THE DEFINITION OF A FIRST RESPONDER IN NEW YORK STATE SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE PUBLIC WORK PROFESSIONALS; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2003, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ISSUED PRESIDENTIAL POLICY DIRECTIVE 8 (PPD-8) OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZING PUBLIC WORKS AS FIRST RESPONDERS; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2010, MISSISSIPPI, UNDER HOUSE BILL (HB) 664, RECOGNIZED PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSIONALS AS FIRST RESPONDERS; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2017, THE APWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVED THE ADOPTION OF A NATIONAL “PUBLIC WORKS FIRST RESPONDER” SYMBOL FOR USE THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA TO IDENTIFY PUBLIC WORKS PERSONNEL AND ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR FEDERALLY MANDATED ROLE AS FIRST RESPONDERS; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2019, THE US SENATE PASSED SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 15 (S.CON.RES.15), “EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 28, 2019, AS HONORING THE NATION’S FIRST RESPONDERS DAY.” PUBLIC WORKS IS SPECIFICALLY INCLUDED; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2022 NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR CHRIS SUNUNU SIGNED INTO LAW SB325, FORMALLY RECOGNIZING PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES AS FIRST RESPONDERS; AND

WHEREAS, IN 2022, NEW HAMPSHIRE PASSED HB 536, “AN ACT RELATIVE TO DEATH BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY, AND RELATIVE TO WORKERS’ COMPENSATION OFFSETS FOR CERTAIN RETIREMENT SYSTEM BENEFITS.”; AND

WHEREAS, PUBLIC WORKS IS OFTEN CONSIDERED “THE SILENT ARM OF PUBLIC SAFETY”. PUBLIC WORKS PROFESSIONALS ARE OFTEN THE FIRST ON SCENE AND THE LAST TO LEAVE THE SCENES OF DISASTERS—NO MATTER THE PERIL; AND

WHEREAS, THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS) LISTS PUBLIC WORKS ALONGSIDE POLICE, FIRE, AND PUBLIC; AND

RESOLVED, THAT THE WESTCHESTER BOARD OF LEGISLATORS ASK THAT NEW YORK STATE AMEND THE DEFINITION OF FIRST RESPONDER TO INCLUDE PUBLIC WORK PROFESSIONALS; AND

RESOLVED, THAT THE CLERK OF THE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS IS DIRECTED TO SEND A COPY OF THIS RESOLUTION TO GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL, SENATE MAJORITY LEADER ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS, ASSEMBLY SPEAKER CARL HEASTIE, MINORITY LEADER ROBERT G. ORTT, MINORITY LEADER WILLIAM A. BARCLAY AND THE MEMBERS OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY STATE DELEGATION