



# UNITED FIREFIGHTERS of LOS ANGELES CITY

Local 112 IAFF AFL-CIO-CLC

May 14, 2025

Honorable Katy Yaroslavsky  
Budget and Finance Committee  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Chairwoman Yaroslavsky:

We are reaching out to you today on behalf of the nearly 3,400 members of United Firefighters of Los Angeles City (UFLAC) regarding the discussions related to the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

As stated in our previous letter dated April 28, 2025, UFLAC understands that the City is facing a major budget deficit and that difficult decisions must be made by our elected leaders. At the same time, the Mayor's proposed LAFD allocation of \$923 million for FY 2025-26 is not enough to sustain a fire department that is tasked with protecting nearly 4 million people and responding to well over 500,000 emergency calls for service each year.

At the City Council Budget and Finance committee meeting on May 8, 2025, several proposed cuts to the current and proposed 2025-26 LAFD budget were discussed totaling \$24.3 million dollars. While it's worth noting that this figure is less than the CAO's proposed \$34.7 million cut in his memo dated May 7, 2025, we want to be clear that a \$24.3 million dollar cut is both unsustainable and unacceptable to the members that we represent.

We would like to explain why each of the major proposed cuts will hurt public safety.

## **1) Homeless Fire Protection and Street Medicine Program (\$11,202,726)**

This expansion of services, including resolution authorities for 67 positions, is critical to properly staff the LAFD when we our firefighters and paramedics are truly on the frontlines of the homeless crisis. In 2024, our members responded to more than 66,446 homeless related emergency calls for service (182 calls per day). In addition, between 2018 and 2024, the LAFD responded to 76,449 homeless related fires (35 per day).

This new funding in the Mayor's proposed budget is designated to staff four LAFD Fast Response Vehicles (FRVs), four Advanced Provider Units (APRUs), two Basic Life Support (BLS) Ambulances, and much more.

Our firefighters and paramedics are already stretched to their limits responding to nearly 200 homeless related calls for service every day. These additional positions and resources will allow our members to continue this work and still be able to respond in a timely manner to other medical emergencies and structure fires that happen every day in each council district.

## **2) Emergency Incident Technician (EIT) Reduction (\$7,418,354)**

Eliminating 42 EIT positions will have an immediate negative impact on incident command and management as well as firefighter and public safety at major incidents which happen every single day in our city. EITs play a critical role in managing emergency responses, coordinating resources, ensuring effective communication, and supporting incident commanders. They are highly trained and dedicated firefighters who serve as a



bridge between command staff and the boots on the ground firefighters and paramedics on scene. In fact, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states that EITs (also known as Fireground Incident Technicians or FITs) are an essential part of the Incident Management System and must continue to be deployed at each emergency incident.

In addition to the immediate impact that the removal of EITs will have on public and firefighter safety in the field, this action would violate the Modified Coverage Letter of Agreement (LOA) in MOU 23 for 2024-2028 which was agreed to by UFLAC and CAO Matt Szabo on November 4, 2024. This LOA states, in part:

***“During the term of the current MOU, the Department agrees to not implement any deployment modification which involves scheduled Field Resource closures...any long-term Field Resource closures, or any variation of scheduled closures...Field Resource is defined as any front-line emergency response company or unit assigned to one of the four Geographic Bureaus with personnel assigned to it on a full-time basis and has authorized position authorities assigned to it.”***

It's clear that our LAFD Emergency Incident Technicians are a critical front-line emergency response unit with full-time personnel and authorized position authorities assigned. They are in fact a Field Resource as defined in our MOU and removing these positions would violate both the Modified Coverage LOA and the mandate for constant staffing that is guaranteed throughout MOU 23 for firefighter and public safety.

In previous budget deficits, the City of Los Angeles cut EITs with devastating results. We implore you to not make the same mistake and continue the funding for these critical positions.

### **3) Supply and Maintenance Staffing (\$2,457,265)**

For the past several years, the lack of civilian mechanics and trained professionals at our LAFD shops has led to a revolving door of at least 100 fire trucks, engines, ambulances, and special duty vehicles being offline and unavailable to respond to community emergencies. The negative impact of this short staffing was highlighted during the Palisades Fire, but the everyday consequences are even more concerning.

We don't have enough frontline and backup rigs to respond to emergencies as it is. This problem becomes a crisis when dozens and dozens of multi-million-dollar apparatus are stuck at the LAFD Fleet & Maintenance yards because we don't have enough mechanics and related positions (carpenters, welders, painters, sheet metal workers, etc.) to fix them.

Thankfully, Mayor Bass included nine months of funding and resolution authorities for 26 positions in her proposed budget to address this problem. Cutting this desperately needed staffing would be shortsighted and incredibly dangerous as our firefighters responded to 514,211 emergency calls for service in 2024, which is an average of 1,409 calls per day.

### **4) Assorted Cuts to Firefighter Safety Needs (\$2,957,000)**

The Budget & Finance Committee spoke about cutting proposed budget allocations to Firefighter Turnout Maintenance and Repair (\$1.5 million), Voice and Data Communications Equipment (\$1 million), and Fire Station Maintenance (\$457,000). Each of these items are critical for firefighter safety.

With respect to Firefighter Turnout Maintenance and Repair and Fire Station Maintenance, it should be noted that firefighters have a considerably higher rate of cancer than the general public. In fact, the profession of firefighting itself has been classified as a Group 1 Carcinogen that is known to cause cancer and be harmful to humans. Every day, our members are exposed to toxic, cancer-causing chemicals in the air we breathe and the turnouts that we wear. Although there has been a commitment at the national and state level to one day produce firefighter turnouts that don't contain cancer causing Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), this equipment does not exist today. Therefore, regular specialized cleaning of our turnouts and our fire stations where we utilize this gear is essential in our ongoing fight against cancer in the fire service. The money spent on workers comp, disability claims, and death benefits for firefighters who acquire occupational cancer far outweighs any small amount of savings that are achieved through cutting specialized turnout and fire station cleaning.

The money allocated to Voice and Data Communications Equipment is also critical for firefighter and community safety because we need to be able to effectively communicate in all emergency situations. Firefighters need situational awareness at all times, and this comes with reliable communications, especially in the event of a Mayday call or other circumstances where a firefighter or member of the public is in dire risk.

Finally, we want to remind you that LAFD Firefighters and Paramedics have not been properly paid for years. We urge you to find a way to fix this problem which includes nearly \$1.8 million in funding for payroll integration software and staffing.

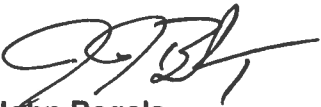
Once again, we understand that the City of Los Angeles is in a budget crisis, but there should be no greater priority in the City's budget than the lifesaving work of the LAFD. At the same time, we understand how important civilian positions are in other LA City departments and we don't want hard working city employees to be laid off.

What then is the answer? As stated in our previous budget letter, a good place to start would be with the hundreds of millions of dollars spent each year on the homeless crisis with very little to show for it. We ask once again, where has this funding gone and what do we have to show for it? What we're doing is not working and we need to completely change the way that we've been approaching the homeless epidemic.


The Mayor's proposed budget took positive steps in the right direction towards funding your LAFD. We're asking you and the members of the B&F Committee to keep this funding intact and not cut the proposed budget.

We thank you for your time and careful consideration of our position on these incredibly important issues.

Sincerely,



**John Bagala**  
IAFF Local 112 Conservator



**Jason Powell**  
Treasurer



**David Riles**  
Director



**Kevin Frank**  
Director



**Richard Ramirez**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President



**Kent Koffler**  
Secretary



**Ryan Quigley**  
Director



**Dave Fabela**  
Director

CC: Budget and Finance Committee Members  
Honorable City Council Members  
Mayor Karen Bass  
CAO Matt Szabo  
Interim Fire Chief Ronnie Villanueva  
Board of Fire Commissioners