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Attention the Fire Services Bill Select Committee.

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Ian Hamley I am a proud volunteer and a PTA staff member of CFA. I take this opportunity to raise some of my concerns about the Fire Services Legislation which the Victorian Government has rushed through the Lower House and has attempted to rush through the Legislative Council.

I have been a member for 17 years and have served in various positions in my brigade as Captain & Lieutenant. In the past 17 years I have applied myself to training and have acquired qualifications as Crew Leader, Strike Team Leader, Sector Commander and Operations Officer L2.

I raise my concern as an experienced fire fighter with some understanding of CFA and its relationship with Victorian communities.

One of my concerns is that the Presumptive Rights (Cancer) legislation does not treat paid and volunteer firefighters equally. Under this new legislation a paid firefighter with one of the 12 prescribed cancers will automatically get access to treatment and compensation. A volunteer firefighter will have to be "considered" by an unspecified panel and then may be granted treatment.

Having watched the Fiskville process where members had to fight for their rights, I would hate for my family to have to go through that process of a legal battle. This legislation treats volunteers like second class citizen. It is not only unfair it is unjust.

Victoria is recognised as one of the most at risk bushfire regions in the world and as such needs the best fire fighting capability in the world. This legislation divides Victoria's fire fighting capacity and potentially puts us all at risk when the next Ash Wednesday or Black Saturday occurs.

When (not if) another major fire event occurs will we have the surge capacity to meet the challenge? Or will it have been eroded because those brigades we depend on have been deskilled or sidelined because the proposed legislation puts a large number of volunteers in FRV areas where their skills and knowledge will be underutilised?

Another of my concerns is the motive for this new legislation and its potential effects on CFA Volunteers I don't understand why we need to divide CFA into career only and volunteer only services.

None of these inquiries have suggested separating CFA into a volunteer service only and a career service only; and the Bushfires Royal Commission actually praised the integrated model of paid and volunteers working together.

What is the motive for this dramatic change in fire services in Victoria? The Premier spoke about the stream of inquiries into CFA as a justification yet not one of these inquiries advocated for a restructure of CFA, indeed where CFA's structure was mentioned it was to support the integrated model and build on that model.

As a CFA Volunteer and staff member I see this exercise as nothing more than a very expensive strategy for Premier Andrews to sell fire fighting in Victoria out to the UFU?

Finally, considering Victoria is one of the most at risk fire regions in the world and that this legislation will affect every Victorian household, please consider these key questions,

1. **Has the Victorian community been sufficiently consulted on this legislation to fully understand the consequences this will have in the future?**
2. **Are you confident that this legislation will not erode CFA's surge capacity?**
3. **Do you believe that even with this short Inquiry that you know enough about this legislation to risk Victoria's fire safety?**
4. **Do you believe that by removing the integrated model where volunteers and career members work side by side will benefit the Victorian community in the future?**

Thank you for considering my submission

I wish for this submission to be listed on the Committee's website.

Yours faithfully,

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Ian Hamley

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