

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS MINIARD CULPEPPER, ERIN J. MURPHY, EDWARD M. FLYNN, BREADON, DURKAN, FITZGERALD, LOUIJEUNE, MEJIA, PEPÉN, WEBER, AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING CANCER-CAUSING CHEMICALS IN BOSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT TURNOUT GEAR AND THE TRANSITION TO PFAS-FREE REPLACEMENT UNIFORMS

WHEREAS, Firefighters face disproportionately high rates of occupational cancer, with studies showing firefighters have a significantly higher risk of developing and dying from cancer compared to the general public; *and*

WHEREAS, Research from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), and other public health organizations has identified PFAS chemicals, commonly referred to as “forever chemicals,” in firefighter turnout gear and protective uniforms, with exposure linked to increased risks of cancer and other serious health impacts; *and*

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has enacted laws to phase out PFAS chemicals in firefighter protective gear, while fire departments across the country have begun transitioning to PFAS-free turnout gear in response to growing health and safety concerns; *and*

WHEREAS, The International Association of Fire Fighters and occupational safety experts have recommended replacing legacy turnout gear containing PFAS chemicals as safer alternatives become commercially available; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston has a responsibility to ensure that Boston firefighters are provided with the safest possible equipment and uniforms that protect firefighters not only from immediate fire hazards, but also from long-term occupational health risks; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the presence of PFAS and other carcinogenic chemicals in Boston Fire Department turnout gear and uniforms, evaluate the availability and feasibility of transitioning to PFAS-free and carcinogen-free replacement uniforms, review current procurement and testing standards for firefighter protective equipment, and assess steps the City can take to better protect firefighters from occupational cancer risks; and that representatives from the Boston Fire Department and other interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed on: May 20, 2026