

NEWS RELEASE

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Commissioners Celebrate International Firefighters' Day

(WHITE TWP., NJ – May 26, 2021) – Calling firefighters “the backbone of our community,” the Warren County Board of County Commissioners proclaimed International Firefighters’ Day to honor all those who not only battle blazes but also stand ready for storms, accidents, water rescues and more.

International Firefighters’ Day was established in May 1999 after bush fires in Australia claimed the lives of five firefighters in December 1998 as a way to recognize all the men and women worldwide who put their lives on the line and help to keep their communities safe.

“The firefighter community of Warren County truly represents our bravest,” Commissioner Director James R. Kern III said, noting, “Many times these men and women are the first to the scene of not just fires but all types of emergencies or accidents. This county relies heavily on volunteer agencies and many leave their jobs on a moment’s notice to help their neighbors in need.”

Kern added, “Their dedication isn’t just displayed during times of crisis but as leaders in their communities teaching the importance of fire safety. I am so thankful for the courage and quick decision making they show each day.”

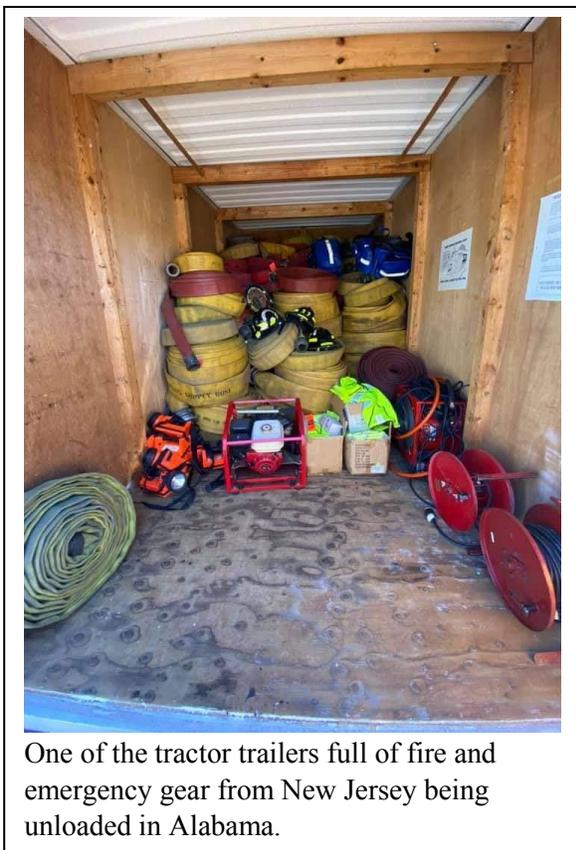
“As the son of a volunteer firefighter, I know the sacrifices that our



Commissioner Director James R. Kern III, Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski (at left) and Commissioner Lori Ciesla (third from right) present the International Firefighters’ Day proclamation to (l-r) Chief Richard Hay of Phillipsburg Fire Department; Chief Joseph Meecey III of the Warren County Active Chiefs Committee; Chief Steve Alpaugh, Warren County Fire Coordinator; Chief Joseph Fox, Sr., Warren County Fire Academy Director; Chief Mark DeVoe of the Northwest New Jersey Fire Fighters and First Responders; Chief Joseph Lake, Warren County Fire Marshal; and Chief Scott Tillou of the Warren County Fire Chiefs Association.

firefighters make and the risks they take to save lives. I am honored to recognize their role in our community with this proclamation,” County Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski remarked.

“Firefighters convey a sense of community and community service through their leadership and time,” Sarnoski added.



“Being a firefighter is in the blood, heart and soul of a person,” County Commissioner Lori Ciesla said, also noting she is the daughter and granddaughter of firefighters. “I know the passion and dedication that motivates these brave men and women to run into danger when others are running out. One day isn’t enough to thank you all for your service and dedication,” she added.

The commissioners also recognized the efforts of local firefighters who have been collecting and delivering fire equipment and trucks to fellow firefighters in Alabama, where tornados earlier this year caused catastrophic losses of gear and vehicles. Moreover, many fire companies there are using outdated equipment,

which area firefighters are helping to replace with their own surplus gear.

Chief Mark DeVoe of the Northwest New Jersey Fire Fighters and First Responders, who has been instrumental in the equipment collection drive, said Warren County is blessed to be able to provide other counties and states with additional equipment. More than 150 fire companies in Alabama will have been helped by the time the third tractor trailer full of gear arrives there next month, he noted.

“This equipment we’re sending down has been a godsend,” DeVoe said, added that 16 counties in New Jersey, 5 in Pennsylvania and 2 in New York have contributed to the effort.

Accepting the proclamation were DeVoe; Chief Joseph Lake, Warren County Fire Marshal; Chief Joseph Fox, Sr., Warren County Fire Academy Director; Chief Steve Alpaugh, Warren County Fire Coordinator; Chief Scott Tillou of the Warren County Fire Chiefs Association; Chief Joseph Mecsey III of the Warren County Active Chiefs Committee; and Chief Richard Hay of Phillipsburg Fire Department.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS' DAY

WHEREAS, International Firefighters' Day was established in 1999 after the tragic loss of five firefighters during a bushfire in Australia in December 1998, and since then has become a day in May to say thank you to the world's firefighters for all that they do to keep our communities safe; and

WHEREAS, more intensive and thorough training is one of the main aspects of International Firefighters' Day, to prevent firefighter injuries and deaths; and

WHEREAS, fire prevention is another important focus of International Firefighters' Day, educating the populace in how they can prevent fires from occurring; and

WHEREAS, firefighters are the backbone of the community, not only standing ready to bravely battle blazes and rescue those in harm's way, but also serving in emergencies of all types, be it fires, storms, accidents, water rescues and more; and

WHEREAS, firefighters in Warren County have time and again stepped up to help those in need, most recently collecting and delivering fire equipment and trucks to fellow firefighters in Alabama who suffered catastrophic losses of gear and vehicles in tornados earlier this year; and

WHEREAS, firefighters so far have collected and delivered vehicles, miles of hose, turnout gear, firefighting tools, and emergency medical services equipment, and are continuing to do so; and

WHEREAS, according to Lieutenant JJ Edmondson, Founder of International Firefighters' Day, "The role of a firefighter in today's society – be it urban, rural, natural environment, volunteer, career, industrial, defense force, aviation, motor sport, or other is one of dedication, commitment and sacrifice – no matter what country we reside and work in. In the fire service we fight together against one common enemy – fire – no matter what country we come from, what uniform we wear or what language we speak."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Warren County Board of County Commissioners proclaims International Firefighters' Day and salutes all of the men and women firefighters in Warren County and beyond.

James R. Kern III, Director
Jason J. Sarnoski, Deputy Director
Lori Ciesla, Commissioner
Warren County Board of County Commissioners