



Wisconsin Chapter
International Association of Arson Investigators, Inc.
PO Box 389
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
(608) 825-1967

06/02/09

Members of the State of Wisconsin Assembly:

The WI Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators is a statewide organization that has membership from Law Enforcement, Fire Service, Insurance Companies, Attorneys, Professional Engineers and Private Fire Investigators. We currently have over 600 members in this association. A vast majority of our members are Wisconsin voters.

Our members work closely with Department of Justice (DOJ)/Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) personnel. Specifically, we work closely with DOJ/DCI agents from the State Fire Marshall's Office. The cooperation from DOJ/DCI agents is paramount to the successful detection and prosecution of arsons in the state.

We are currently attending our annual seminar in Stevens Point, WI. It has come to our attention that the Joint Finance Committee is recommending an additional 5% cut back assigned to the upcoming 2 year operating budget for the Wisconsin Department of Justice. If this additional cutback is passed, it will result in certain layoffs for the Department of Justice. Taking into account the current unfilled positions, an additional 80 people at the Department of Justice would need to be laid off. The Division of Criminal Investigation represents 20% of the Department of Justice. Therefore, 16 people would be laid off from that group. Currently there are 8 Special Agents assigned to the State Fire Marshal's Office. If the 5% cutback is passed, it is estimated that 3 Special Agents from the State Fire Marshal's Office would be laid off. That represents a 37.5 % decrease in State Fire Marshal personnel.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is the only statewide agency with jurisdiction to investigate fire and explosions. Those investigations are commonly conducted in conjunction with representatives of our membership.

The Wisconsin Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators is against the decision to add the additional 5% budget cut to the Wisconsin Department of Justice. We would strongly encourage you to vote against this additional cut back. This proposed cut will have a direct, negative impact on the safety of the citizens within the State of Wisconsin. On May 22nd 2009, Governor Doyle is quoted as saying, "We must preserve our essential services such as education and public safety." In the interest of Public Safety, we ask that the Department of Justice be treated like other public safety entities and be exempt from the additional 5% cuts.

Sincerely,

Donald Henning, President

WI Chapter 25, International Association of Arson Investigators (WI Chapter 25, IAAI)