

CAMPUS Firewatch

July 26, 2016

Governor Nikki Haley
PO Box 12267
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Governor Haley:

I am following up to a request sent in January, co-signed by parents who had lost children in college-related fires, for a proclamation designating September as Campus Fire Safety Month. Since 2005, over 340 proclamations have been signed, as well as resolutions in the United States House and Senate. And, in that period of time, fire deaths at our nation's schools have dropped dramatically, primarily because of the heightened awareness about the importance of campus fire safety among students, parents, colleges and universities.

I hope that you will consider signing a proclamation and help in this campaign to stop the needless loss of life. College is a time of growth, adventure and learning, and learning how to keep safe is a skill that our youth can carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Enclosed with this letter is suggested language for a proclamation. If you should have any questions, please contact me at any time at ecomeau@campus-firewatch.com or 413-296-1982.

Thank you for your support in this important effort.

Sincerely,



Edward R. Comeau
Campus Firewatch

Proclamation

To express the support of the establishment of September as Campus Fire Safety Month and for other purposes.

Whereas recent student-related housing fires in Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Washington, DC, and other schools across the country have tragically cut short the lives of some of the youth of our Nation;

Whereas since January 2000, at least 170 people, including students, parents, and children have died in college-related fires;

Whereas approximately 87 percent of these deaths have occurred in off-campus occupancies;

Whereas a majority of the students across the Nation live in off-campus occupancies;

Whereas a number of fatal fires have occurred in buildings where the fire safety systems have been compromised or disabled by the occupants;

Whereas it is recognized that automatic fire alarm systems and smoke alarms provide the necessary early warning to occupants and the fire department of a fire so that appropriate action can be taken;

Whereas it is recognized that automatic fire sprinkler systems are a highly effective method of controlling or extinguishing a fire in its early stages, protecting the lives of the building's occupants;

Whereas many students are living in off-campus occupancies, Greek housing, and residence halls that are not adequately protected with automatic fire sprinkler systems and automatic fire alarm systems or adequate smoke alarms;

Whereas it is recognized that fire safety education is an effective method of reducing the occurrence of fires and reducing the resulting loss of life and property damage;

Whereas students are not routinely receiving effective fire safety education throughout their entire college career;

Whereas it is vital to educate the future generation of our Nation about the importance of fire safety behavior so that these behaviors can help to ensure their safety during their college years and beyond; and

Whereas by developing a generation of fire-safe adults, future loss of life from fires can be significantly reduced: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Governor—

(1) supports the establishment of September as Campus Fire Safety Month;

(2) encourages schools and municipalities across the country to provide educational programs to all students during September and throughout the school year; and

(3) encourages schools and municipalities to evaluate the level of fire safety being provided in both on- and off-campus student housing and take the necessary steps to ensure fire-safe living environments through fire safety education, installation of fire suppression and detection systems and smoke alarms and the development and enforcement of applicable codes relating to fire safety.