

## **PANEL APPROVES WISNIEWSKI/SCALERA FIREFIGHTER TRAINING STANDARDIZATION BILL**

(TRENTON) -- The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee today released a measure Assembly Assistant Majority Leader John S. Wisniewski and Assemblyman Fred Scalera sponsored to provide state firefighters with nationally recognized training certification.

The measure (A-2247) would require that all recruit firefighter training programs conducted by the Division of Fire Safety in the state Department of Community Affairs be accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications, the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress, or any successor entity.

"It makes sense for firefighters in New Jersey to take nationally recognized training courses," said Wisniewski (D-Middlesex). "Many times, firefighters use their skills beyond the borders of this state."

The bill provides that people who successfully complete accredited recruit firefighter training programs would be eligible to receive certificates of national certification offered by the organization that has accredited the training program.

"Nationally accredited training courses are recognized throughout the country," said Scalera (D-Nutley), Deputy Nutley Fire Chief. "Right now, since courses taken by emergency services personnel in New Jersey are not recognized nationally, the personnel are disqualified from taking higher level courses available out-of-state."

The bill also would allow firefighters to take nationally accredited courses outside of the state and have the certification be recognized in New Jersey.

The legislation would require the director of the Division of Fire Safety to adopt rules and regulations to implement the measure. It would take effect two years after the bill is enacted. The measure was released 6 to 0 and now goes to the Assembly Speaker, who decides if and when to post it for a floor vote