



## **NEWS:**

# **Dwindling Firefighter Ranks Spark Concern**

**JUNE 24, 2019** -- Delaware needs to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters.

Most Delawareans rely on volunteer firefighters to protect their homes and communities, but the number of volunteers serving in those roles has been steadily declining for years. State Rep. Danny Short, a former chief of the Seaford Volunteer Fire Department, said not only does this trend potentially jeopardize public safety, it creates a growing financial burden as fire companies are forced to rely on paid staff to provide needed coverage.

Rep. Short recently joined with his colleagues on both sides of the aisle to sponsor [House Concurrent Resolution 50](#), forming a task force to suggest ways to bolster Delaware's flagging number of volunteers.

The 15-member group will present its recommendations to the governor, General Assembly, and the Delaware Volunteer Firefighters' Association by the start of the New Year.

According to a [2015 report](#) released by the Office of the State Auditor, taxpayers would pay an additional \$193 million annually if Delaware's volunteer firefighters had to be replaced with paid staff.

**IN PHOTO:** On the House floor preceding the passage of HCR 50, State Reps. Danny Short & Bill Carson, and members of the Delaware Volunteer Firefighters' Association, discuss the challenges facing Delaware's volunteer fire companies.