**MnFIRE Legislative Template Letter**

*Dear MnFIRE Supporter,*

*Thank you for supporting the Hometown Heroes Assistance Program and firefighters across our state by writing your local legislator in support of this program. Please feel free to use the template letter below as a guide. We’ve highlighted a few sections that should be changed, but we encourage you to make changes beyond that. The more you can personalize the letter and make it your own, the more powerful it will be.*

*You can find your legislators’* [*contact information HERE*](https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/)*.*

*Please let us know if you have any questions!*

*The MnFIRE Team*

Dear [Representative or Senator] [Insert Legislator’s Last Name],

I urge you, on behalf of firefighters across our state, to ensure the Minnesota legislature continues to support the Hometown Heroes Assistance Program (HHAP). In case you’re not already aware, the HHAP was first passed in July 2021 and dedicates $4 million per year to ensure that every Minnesota firefighter will have access to the education, prevention and care needed to handle a cardiac, emotional trauma or cancer diagnosis.

As a [insert personal connection to MnFIRE cause i.e. firefighter, fire chief, etc.], I have seen the need for this program firsthand.

[If applicable, include a paragraph on personal experiences you’ve had with cancer, cardiac or mental health issues]

*Here are some fictional examples to use as a guide for writing your own:*

* *“As the fire chief in my county for the last decade, I’ve seen countless firefighters on my staff struggle with mental health issues after a tough call. Having a central resource like MnFIRE and their 24/7 peer support hotline makes all the difference in restoring my firefighter’s mental well-being.”*
* *“A few years ago, I had a firefighting colleague receive a devastating cancer diagnosis. He and his family struggled to make ends meet while he received treatment. A program like the Hometown Heroes Assistance Program would have changed their lives.”*
* *“I was recently diagnosed with cardiac issues due to my years fighting fires. I was able to access the $20,000 critical illness insurance through the HHAP and it was so helpful for covering costs of childcare, time off, and staying near the hospital while I received treatment.”*

I’m not alone in my experiences, and that’s been very evident over the past two years the HHAP has been in effect. As of July 2023:

* More than 16,000 firefighters have been trained on their occupational health risks.
* MnFIRE has fielded 653 peer support calls.
* There have been 1,332 visits to MnFIRE Assistance Program (MAP) providers for emotional trauma support.
* 141 critical illness claims have been paid (totaling $1,832,250) to firefighters with a cardiac, emotional trauma or cancer diagnosis.

This program, which is the most comprehensive firefighter well-being legislation in the nation, has already proven to be a worthy investment. I thank you for passing this legislation in July 2021, and urge you to ensure it continues to be funded and supported.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[TITLE]