



Illinois Fire Inspectors Association

Serving Illinois Fire Departments Since 1967

February 28, 2015

TO: Illinois Fire Inspectors Association Members
FROM: Mike Toika, President

Subject: Senate Bill 1685

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Recently several email blasts were sent out by Mr. Lehan (the Executive Director of the Illinois Electronic Security Association) in response to two pieces of Legislation that were introduced into the Illinois Senate by Senator Thomas Cullerton. The two Bills that Mr. Lehan references are Senate Bill 1495, proposed by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, and Senate Bill 1685, proposed by the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association.

Senate Bill 1685 titled "Fire Alarm Professional Licensing Act", as introduced by the Illinois Fire Inspectors Association (IFIA) is designed to provide requirements for licensing of fire alarm contractors, designers, installers, technicians, and agencies. It also establishes requirements for the installation, repair, inspection and testing of fire alarm systems, and licensing and certification requirements for persons performing these duties.

I cannot speak to Senate Bill 1495 as it was introduced by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. Mr. Lehan implies that the IFIA is involved in the drafting of this legislation. That is not true. However, I would be remiss if I didn't state that the IFIA would support this legislation by the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. I would like to make it perfectly clear however, that Senate Bill 1685 is an **Illinois Fire Inspectors Association initiative**.

I would like to address several issues stated by Mr. Lehan. The first is the comment that Senate Bill 1685 would tremendously hurt the value of any fire alarm contractor or company. This Bill would greatly strengthen a company or organization by creating minimum standards and continuing education requirements in line with the current nationally recognized organizations (NICET for example). With minimum requirements every fire alarm company would be playing on a level playing field, rather than compete with a company that shouldn't install or perform work on a fire alarm system, by trying to undercut pricing to gain work, then installing or performing work on a system in an incorrect, or unprofessional manner. It would also strengthen a company as it would require mandatory reporting of test results to the local AHJ as the Fire Sprinkler Act currently does. How does this strengthen your company? By reporting the testing results to the local AHJ, the AHJ is able to follow up and require the deficiencies be corrected. This would, naturally, mean that the Fire Alarm Companies would have more business due to being contracted to perform the necessary repairs.

The next item is his statement on the timing of SB 1685 being an attack against Judge Shadur's award to the alarm industry. Our legislation has absolutely no relationship with SB 1495 or the timing of the filing. IFIA proposed this legislation well before Judge Shadur's ruling and had absolutely no control of when, or if, any legislator would pick up our proposal. As such, I don't see how the timing of this bill is relevant.

I would highly encourage everyone in the Fire Alarm Industry, or anyone with an interest in fire alarm systems, go to the **State of Illinois General Assembly Webpage** and read SB 1685 in its entirety, and form their own opinions based on what the actual Bill says. However, the three main bullet points of this Bill are:

- 1) Licensing of fire alarm companies
- 2) Establishing minimum requirements for workers who design, install, repair, or test fire alarm systems.
- 3) Require mandatory reporting of fire alarm inspections to the AHJ.

The Illinois Fire Service, Illinois Fire Inspectors, Illinois Fire Alarm Industry, and Fire Sprinkler Industry have one common goal that must be remembered. We are in this to provide critical Life Safety Systems to the general public. We strongly believe that this Bill greatly enhances the quality and professionalism of maintaining this objective.

If anyone would like to discuss the initiative introduced by the IFIA in Senate Bill 1685, please feel free to contact us. The IFIA office phone is 224-387-3340 or email us at ifia@illinoisfireinspectors.org. If you prefer to contact me personally my email is mtoika@addisonfire.org. The IFIA would look forward to discussing the merits of this Bill with any company or group.

Please forward this email to anyone in your network that might have an interest (pro or con) in this issue so that they can understand the facts themselves.

To find your State Representatives please visit:

<http://www.elections.il.gov/districtlocator/addressfinder.aspx>

Thank you,

Michael E. Toika

President
Illinois Fire Inspectors Association

