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**Opinion:**

**Union rules can't trump worker rights; Firefighters should be able to work and volunteer**

Most Americans take it for granted that when we punch the clock and leave work, our time is our own to do with as we choose. More than 800,000 men and women in this country choose to dedicate a significant portion of their free time to serving their communities as volunteer firefighters. These individuals train on nights and weekends and are "on call" to respond to emergencies when they aren't at their full-time jobs.

For thousands of career firefighters, the choice to volunteer for their hometown fire department during off-duty hours comes with a threat of expulsion from their labor union. That is exactly what happened to Vincent Pereira and Michael Schaffer, firefighters from New Jersey who were targeted by the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) because of their volunteer service. Mr. Pereira was expelled, and Mr. Schaffer departed the IAFF on his own after being threatened with expulsion if he didn't stop volunteering.

**Read complete article at Fireengineering.com: [Union rules can't trump worker rights; Firefighters should be able to work and volunteer](#)**