

The Mesa PAC

What It Is and What It Does

The Mesa PAC (Political Action Committee) is an Arizona Standing Political Committee. Funds for this committee are obtained through the voluntary donations from members of the Mesa Chapter of the United Mesa Fire Fighters Association, Local 2260. The expenditures and collections of this separate, segregated fund (funds are not and cannot be commingled with the general fund) are reported to the State of Arizona 9 times per year.

The purpose of this fund is to support candidates and issues that are amicable to the interests of fire fighters. We have little interest in what party affiliation a candidate might have (although we typically support more Republicans than Democrats). Likewise, the candidates' stands on other issues are of little interest to us and, in fact, cannot be given any real weight at all. We do not and legally cannot support, oppose or in any way be involved with candidates for federal offices (U.S. Congressman, U.S. Senator, President).

We help our neighboring IAFF Locals in electing people to Council Seats and the Mayor's seat, just as they help us in the same way. This is essential, as most fire fighters are unable (by law) to directly participate in the elections involving city government.

The Mesa PAC supports ballot issues regarding fire fighter interests. Two notable examples are Districting in Mesa and the amendment to the Arizona Constitution that effectively makes our pension monies the property of the members (Article 29, Section 1). Our PAC was also instrumental in the defeat of the Ax the Tax proposal that, had it succeeded, would have resulted in layoffs and severe reductions in services for fire agencies across the state.

Decisions on who/what to support are made and endorsed by the Officers of our Local, and are based upon the criteria listed above. These political endorsements are available to the general membership on request (it should be noted that *most* PAC donations are upon specific request from neighboring Locals).

As former IAFF General-President Al Whitehead put it, "Money is the mother's milk of politics." Nothing could be more true. Like it or not, money is what it takes to get people to elected offices... people who will support our issues and ward off the bad guys. An uncredited axiom states "Money talks, b.s. walks." Again, very true. Politicians are certainly going to give more of an ear to and work harder for those who actively support them through money and action.

The choice on PAC is a simple one: You can affect the system, or it will affect you. If you choose the latter, the results are guaranteed to be unsatisfactory. We remain strong and continue to make progress for our profession and for our members through the efforts of our elected Union leadership and our participation in the political process, most importantly, PAC. Each member's voluntary PAC contribution helps us remain first-string members on the political playing field.

You have to play to win. If you don't play, you will most assuredly lose...