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OF GREATER NEW YORK
Local 94, I.A.F.F. AFL-CIO

204 EAST 23rd STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10010
TEL. (212) 683-4832 • FAX (212) 683-0710 • www.ufanyc.org
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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S3820-A

A5026-A

Relates to the definition of floor area

The Uniformed Firefighters Association of Greater New York fully endorses and supports this proposed legislation.

This bill highlights the use by developers of “mechanical void spaces” in the construction of buildings in New York City. While the UFA has no position with regard to overall height regulations, we are extremely concerned about the safety issues to the public and Firefighters in connection with void spaces.

Void spaces, often entire floors in buildings put hazardous equipment such as High Voltage Air Conditioning and heating equipment in the middle of buildings, many floors above street level

These void floors bring fire hazards into areas of a building where it is most difficult for Firefighters to fight these types of equipment fires.

Large electrical equipment that is usually more easily accessible to our members will now be located in confined spaces in the midst of buildings where accessing equipment fires with hose lines and other firefighting equipment is most difficult. In other words, placing building equipment on random void space floors moves known fire hazards within a building to areas of the building where such equipment is not generally located, thereby increasing the life safety risks to tenants and Firefighters.

It is difficult enough for Firefighters operating inside of high-rise buildings. Access to the fire area and to whatever is on fire is paramount to save lives and to protect Firefighters operating at these fires.

While we acknowledge and accept the risks of our profession, we strongly oppose construction methods that are inherently dangerous that for no valid reason increase the threat to the lives of the public and our members.

For that reason, we strongly support this bill which would prohibit the creation of these dangerous phantom floors within buildings in New York.