

I am an NOFD Firefighter. I am going to be honest with you about this. This is almost the last straw. I do not believe the City values my contribution. I do not think this Commission, the Mayor, or the CAO are the least bit interested in protecting me as an employee who risks my life every time I show up to work. So. Here we are. The City has been losing money since March. From March through October, the City did little to nothing to prepare for the inevitable. Now, we are staring down Christmas. My kids have been in school at home, which is more expensive. Christmas is coming and I am supposed to keep risking my life every day for 10% less pay. To add insult to injury, the Mayor is coming before this Commission to ask for 20 more than the 12 unpaid leave days the City is allowed. That is one more unpaid leave day during every pay cycle. Fewer firefighters at work means slower responses on fires and medical calls. Slower responses mean people die. I love my job here. I have the chance to genuinely improve the lives of the people I serve. But, it has been more and more clear that I am a worthless commodity in New Orleans.

This Commission has been set on doing the Administration's dirty work for several years now and it just gets worse and worse. They have literally worked hard in order to get around the provisions of the Louisiana Constitution. Promotions have never been more subjective in spite of provisions in the Constitution intended to make the promotional system as objective as possible. This Commission has opened the door to every type of discrimination, cronyism, favoritism, and all of the other "ism's." Don't allow the Administration to exceed the 12 leave days without pay. The rule states that they cannot impose more than the equivalent of 12 leave days without pay over any consecutive 12 month period. That means the Administration will have to come back and make this same request once a month until December 2021 – EVERY MONTH. Will this Commission betray its classified and unclassified employees every month. Will this be the last straw? I know it will be for some.