

Governor honors fallen firefighters at Memorial Service

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SPRINGFIELD -- Governor Bruce Rauner today honored two firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty and congratulated others for tremendous acts of heroism at the 24th Annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service.

"Every day, our firefighters put their lives on the line to protect our families," Governor Rauner said. "Today we honor and remember the sacrifice of two hero firefighters who

paid the ultimate sacrifice to keep our communities safe. Our firefighters are true public servants, and like all our first responders, are among the best and most honorable men and women in our state. "

Governor Rauner and Illinois State Fire Marshal Matt Perez joined firefighters from across Illinois to honor firefighters for their service. The memorial honored Captain Eric Kohlbauer of Freeport and Firefighter and Paramedic Kenneth Harris of Oak Park who both lost their lives during or as a result of their service. State Fire Marshal Perez awarded their loved ones with the Duty Death Gold Badge for their service.

“Our firefighters are the best of the best who serve with courage and bravery,” said State Fire Marshal Perez. “Today we recognize those who went above and beyond the call of duty of service. They are heroes who performed lifesaving measures in the face of tremendous danger. We honor our fallen comrades who gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect their fellow firefighters and Illinoisans. We will never forget their bravery and legacy.”

The Illinois Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Fire Fighting Medal of Honor Awards recognize outstanding firefighters for acts of courage, bravery and heroism. This year, the Illinois State Fire Marshal's Office awarded 36 firefighters and units for their acts.

Video of the memorial service can be found [here](#).