

S.F. firefighters' age bias suit goes down in flames

The decade-long age discrimination litigation saga of 15 San Francisco firefighters has come to an end.

In 2008, the firefighters claimed that an exam the city's fire department used discriminated against older firefighters who were seeking promotions to become lieutenants. Specifically, they argued the city's weighting of questions placed more importance on factors that favored younger firefighters, but were not relevant to the duties actually required of lieutenants.

In 2013, a jury sided with the firefighters and awarded them \$3.7 million. However, the judge overseeing the trial overturned the verdict, ruling that the exam scoring was job-related and not discriminatory. The firefighters appealed to the First District Court of Appeal, which also sided with the city.

Now the California Supreme Court has doused the firefighters' hopes for good, ruling there was nothing unlawful about the promotion exam.

Note: A similar case involving 19 other San Francisco firefighters is still moving through the courts.