

JAN 25 2016

## SENATE RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ISSUE OF  
A CANCER PRESUMPTIVE STATUTE RELATING TO FIREFIGHTERS.

1 WHEREAS, highly concentrated toxicants in the form of  
2 plastics and other synthetics often burn in residential or  
3 vehicle fires; and

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5 WHEREAS, although fire departments have improved procedures  
6 for cleaning firefighters' protective clothing and breathing  
7 apparatus, firefighters may still become exposed to carcinogens  
8 and toxicants while performing their duties; and

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10 WHEREAS, the exposure to toxicants during a firefighter's  
11 career may not result in symptoms or a cancer diagnosis until  
12 years after retirement; and

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14 WHEREAS, University of Cincinnati environmental health  
15 researchers have determined that firefighters are significantly  
16 more likely to develop various types of cancer than workers in  
17 other fields; and

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19 WHEREAS, a study released by the University of Cincinnati  
20 in 2006 found that, when compared to the general population, the  
21 risk for firefighters is:

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23 (1) One hundred and two percent higher for testicular  
24 cancer;

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26 (2) Fifty-three percent higher for multiple myeloma;

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28 (3) Fifty-one percent higher for non-Hodgkin lymphoma;

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30 (4) Thirty-nine percent higher for skin cancer;

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32 (5) Thirty-two percent higher for brain cancer and  
33 malignant melanoma;

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35 (6) Twenty-nine percent higher for rectal cancer;



(7) Twenty-eight percent higher for prostate cancer;

(8) Twenty-four percent higher for buccal cavity and pharynx cancer;

(9) Twenty-two percent higher for stomach cancer;

(10) Twenty-one percent higher for colon cancer; and

(11) Fourteen percent higher for leukemia; and

WHEREAS, a firefighter's cancer diagnosis can also have an enormous impact on a spouse, children, and other family members, including a heavy emotional toll, financial costs, and a decreased quality of life; and

WHEREAS, thirty-four states and nine Canadian provinces have enacted cancer presumptive statutes, which create a presumption that certain types of cancer diagnosed among firefighters result from their employment as firefighters; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016, that various stakeholders are requested to convene a Firefighter Cancer Presumptive Task Force (Task Force) to develop recommendations for the enactment of a cancer presumptive statute relating to firefighters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be comprised of:

(1) The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health, or the Chairperson's designee;

(2) The Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Health, or the Chairperson's designee;

(3) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;

(4) The Director of Human Resources Development, or the Director's designee;



- (5) The Administrator of the Disability Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, or the Administrator's representative;
- (6) The Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, or the Director's designee;
- (7) The director of each county's department that oversees human resources, or the director's designee;
- (8) A representative from the health insurance industry;
- (9) A private attorney familiar with workers' compensation claims;
- (10) The President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association, or the President's designee; and
- (11) A representative from the State Fire Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to provide a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2017; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include:

- (1) An analysis of the number of cancer patients among the State's general population as compared to the number who are firefighters;
- (2) Recommendations, if any, for revisions to workers' compensation statutes to expedite the award of workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;
- (3) An estimate of the cost to the State and counties of workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;



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- (4) Current county fire department safety procedures and protocols related to preventing and reporting firefighter exposure to toxicants; and
- (5) Recommendations, if any, for changes to a fire department's administrative rules to improve workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health; Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Health; Director of Health; Director of Human Resources Development; Administrator of the Disability Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center; director of each county's department that oversees human resources; Fire Chief of each county; President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association; and State Fire Council.

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