



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 682**

January Session, 2003

Substitute House Bill No. 5178

*House of Representatives, May 13, 2003*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. DYSON of the 94th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

**AN ACT EXTENDING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE TO REMARRIED SURVIVING SPOUSES OF POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 5-259 of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
3 *passage*):

4 (a) The Comptroller, with the approval of the Attorney General and  
5 of the Insurance Commissioner, shall arrange and procure a group  
6 hospitalization and medical and surgical insurance plan or plans for  
7 (1) state employees, (2) members of the General Assembly who elect  
8 coverage under such plan or plans, (3) participants in an alternate  
9 retirement program who meet the service requirements of section  
10 5-162 or subsection (a) of section 5-166, (4) anyone receiving benefits  
11 under section 5-144 or from any state-sponsored retirement system,  
12 except the teachers' retirement system and the municipal employees

13 retirement system, (5) judges of probate and Probate Court employees,  
14 (6) the surviving spouse [, until remarriage,] and any dependent  
15 children until they reach the age of eighteen, of a state police officer, a  
16 member of an organized local police department, a firefighter or a  
17 constable who performs criminal law enforcement duties who dies  
18 before, on or after the effective date of this section as the result of  
19 injuries received while acting within the scope of such officer's or  
20 firefighter's or constable's employment and not as the result of illness  
21 or natural causes, and whose surviving spouse and dependent  
22 children are not otherwise eligible for a group hospitalization and  
23 medical and surgical insurance plan, (7) employees of the Capital City  
24 Economic Development Authority established by section 32-601, and  
25 (8) the surviving spouse and dependent children of any employee of a  
26 municipality who dies on or after October 1, 2000, as the result of  
27 injuries received while acting within the scope of such employee's  
28 employment and not as the result of illness or natural causes, and  
29 whose surviving spouse and dependent children are not otherwise  
30 eligible for a group hospitalization and medical and surgical insurance  
31 plan. For purposes of this subdivision, "employee" means any regular  
32 employee or elective officer receiving pay from a municipality, [and]  
33 "municipality" means any town, city, borough, school district, taxing  
34 district, fire district, district department of health, probate district,  
35 housing authority, regional work force development board established  
36 under section 31-3k, flood commission or authority established by  
37 special act or regional planning agency. For purposes of subdivision  
38 (6) of this subsection, "firefighter" means any person who is regularly  
39 employed and paid by any municipality for the purpose of performing  
40 firefighting duties for a municipality on average of not less than thirty-  
41 five hours per week. The minimum benefits to be provided by such  
42 plan or plans shall be substantially equal in value to the benefits  
43 [which] that each such employee or member of the General Assembly  
44 could secure in such plan or plans on an individual basis on the  
45 preceding first day of July. The state shall pay for each such employee  
46 and each member of the General Assembly covered by such plan or  
47 plans the portion of the premium charged for such member's or



The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

---

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Type</b>	<b>FY 04 \$</b>	<b>FY 05 \$</b>
Comptroller Misc. Accounts (Fringe Benefits)	GF - Cost	Potential Indeterminate	Potential Indeterminate

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill eliminates the remarriage provision, which requires that state health benefits end upon the remarriage of a surviving spouse. The bill also adds the surviving spouses of qualified firefighters and specifies that eligibility for state health insurance coverage is based upon not being eligible for any other health insurance plan. There may be a cost to the state for providing benefits that would now be discontinued upon remarriage and for including firefighters. The potential cost cannot be estimated because the number of surviving spouses impacted by the bill is unknown at this time.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sHB 5178

**AN ACT EXTENDING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE TO REMARRIED SURVIVING SPOUSES OF POLICE OFFICERS AND FIREFIGHTERS**

**SUMMARY:**

Under current law, state health insurance coverage is provided for surviving spouses and dependent children, under age 18, of local police officers who die from injuries received in the course of their employment, and the coverage ends if the spouse remarries.

This bill:

1. requires coverage after remarriage;
2. adds paid firefighters and state police to the group entitled to such coverage;
3. specifies that the coverage is provided following work-related deaths occurring before, on, or after the bill's effective date; and
4. specifies that the surviving spouse and dependent children must not be otherwise eligible for another health insurance plan.

Also under current law, the surviving spouse and dependent children of any municipal worker who dies on or after October 1, 2000, as a result of injuries received while on the job, gets state health insurance coverage. This provision covers paid firefighters, but the bill places them in the group where coverage is not tied to a specific death date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**PLAN COVERAGE PROVISIONS**

Under existing law and the bill, the state comptroller is required to provide this insurance, which must include group hospitalization, medical, and surgical plan coverage. The comptroller has the statutory

authority to procure health insurance coverage for all state employees.

**FIREFIGHTER DEFINED**

The bill defines firefighter as any person regularly employed and paid by any municipality to perform firefighting duties for on average at least 35 hours a week.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 12    Nay 0

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 50    Nay 0