



CONNECTICUT STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

January 30, 2007

Senator Edith Prague, Co-Chairman Labor & Public Employees Committee
Representative Kevin Ryan, Co-Chairman Labor & Public Employees Committee

Good Afternoon members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. My name is Ted Schroll, Legislative Representative of the Connecticut State Firefighters Association. The Association represents approximately 28,000 career and volunteer firefighters in Connecticut. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.

The Connecticut State Firefighters Association would like to go on record as being in support of **House Bill #6956 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE OFFICERS.**

As Connecticut's first responders, firefighters consistently face dangerous situations where they are needed to act quickly. Firefighters act in uncontrolled environments with a high risk of on-the-job exposure to dangerous chemicals and communicable diseases. Current Connecticut laws, with their important privacy precautions, make it prohibitive for a firefighter to prove their exposure to communicable diseases while on the job, and yet the burden of proof to an exposure for Workers' compensation coverage cases is on the firefighter.

This legislation would establish a rebuttable presumption so that when firefighters contract work related diseases, such as certain cancers, communicable diseases such as hepatitis, meningococcal meningitis, tuberculosis, and heart & hypertension occurring while such firefighter is on duty, it is presumed that they were exposed to these diseases in the course of their employment provided that such member completed a physical examination on entry into such employment that failed to reveal any evidence of said diseases, unless the contrary is shown by competent evidence..

Firefighters usually put their victims before themselves. Firefighters need to know that their communities support them in what they do. Firefighters protect their communities. The least the community can do is to protect their firefighters. Please support this important legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ted Schroll Jr., Legislative Representative
Connecticut State Firefighters Association