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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 56

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING SEVERE MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENT AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill expands the definition of "personal injuries" under the workers' compensation law. Among other things, this allows an employee to qualify for workers' compensation benefits if:

1. during the course of his or her duties, the employee sees (a) a person's death or maiming or (b) its immediate aftermath (the scene of the death or maiming within six hours after law enforcement officers secure it);
2. the death or maiming was intentionally caused by another person; and
3. a licensed psychiatrist or psychologist diagnoses the employee with a mental or emotional impairment and determines that it originated from the employee seeing the crime or crime scene described above.

Under the bill, "maiming" is the loss of any body part or organ.

The bill also extends workers' compensation wage replacement benefits to (1) police officers who suffer a mental or emotional impairment caused by using, or being subjected to, deadly force in the line of duty and (2) firefighters diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder caused by witnessing the death of another firefighter in the line of duty. Current law limits workers' compensation benefits in these instances to treatment by an approved psychologist or psychiatrist.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014, except for the provision

extending wage replacement benefits to certain police and firefighters, which is effective upon passage.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 8 Nay 3 (03/04/2014)