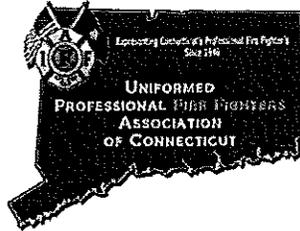


UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT
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Good afternoon, Honorable Chairmen Rep. Terzcyak and Sen. Winfield, members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, my name is Richard Hart. I represent the Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association of Connecticut which represents 43 Local affiliates of the International Association of Firefighters. Membership in the UPPFA is comprised of approximately 4,000 Union firefighters in Connecticut.

I am speaking today in support of H.B.5871(Proposed), An Act Concerning Workers' Compensation Coverage and Emergency Services Personnel.

The dangers of the "job" are well documented, the drone of the bagpipes at a hero's funeral, the long blue lines, the apparatus caisson carrying the hero to his final resting place, giving his life so others may live, also, well documented. But what about the silent killer, hiding, stalking, biding its time in the shadows? There isn't a family in the United States that has not felt the cold touch of cancer. The same is true for the family that is the Fire Service. The toxic atmosphere that we work in on a daily basis holds hidden poisons ready to attack our bodies, long after the fire is out.

You have heard testimony from a firefighter battling cancer, a widow who lost her firefighter husband to cancer, the esteemed doctor from Johns Hopkins University Hospital detailing the science and facts supporting the inextricable link of firefighting to cancer. You heard testimony from a firefighter cancer survivor. There is no need for me to reiterate their testimony. Dr. Philip Landrigan, the preeminent authority on Occupational and Environmental medicine from Mt Sinai Hospital, New York and author of Occupational Cancers in New York City Firefighters, submitted his testimony to the Committee and the text is found in the binder in front of you.

In the binder provided to you, tab 4, page 14, pink post-it in CIRMA's 2012-2013 annual report shows CIRMA's actual workers' compensation rate need was 350% lower than NCCI's rate indication. Based upon actuarial reports from states with cancer covered under workers' compensation, also tab 4 page 3, Connecticut would experience 1.36 career firefighter cancer claims per year, or .034% of all career firefighters. It is proven that the key to reducing costs with cancer is prevention, early detection, prescreening and diagnostic testing. This bill does that along the same lines as the State's Health

Enhancement Program. The argument that this bill will bankrupt cities and towns is completely false and unsubstantiated.

Cancer in the fire service is real. The science supports the desperate need for cancer to be recognized and covered as a presumptive occupational injury in Connecticut, thus covered under Workers' Compensation. By passing this legislation, you not only will do what is right, but you will absolutely have saved an unknown number of firefighter lives

Please support H.B. 5871 (Proposed).

Richard Hart

Richard Hart

DIRECTOR
Legislative/Political Affairs