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## CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION

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Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and distinguished members of the Labor Committee. My name is Andrew Matthews, and I am the President of the Connecticut State Police Union. Our Union represents approximately 1,062 State Troopers, Sergeants and Master Sergeants. I am submitting this letter on behalf of all our Union members in *SUPPORT* of:

### **PROPOSED House Bill #5262**

#### **"An Act Concerning Workers' Compensation Coverage for Current and Former Uniformed Members of Paid or Volunteer Fire Departments"**

Firefighters and State Troopers, particularly in our Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit, have been facing various forms of cancer arising out of their employment. These cancers are caused by exposure to heat, radiation, and toxins. However, to establish the causal connection is difficult and often impossible to prove under the current workers' compensation system. As such, this Bill makes the necessary changes to the burden of proof standard, which will allow for a more reasonable measure for those affected employees.

We would also respectfully request that as you move this Bill forward, that our 12 members of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit be included in the list of those eligible in subsection (b). In line 16 after "paid or volunteer fire department" we would urge you to add "OR A UNIFORMED MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION FIRE AND EXPLOSION INVESTIGATION UNIT ASSIGNED TO INVESTIGATE ARSON." This unit was included in SB 593 that passed the Senate last year (Sec.2, LCO 8077).

*This legislation is not only fair, but provides limited circumstances to be eligible and reduces the potential for abuse. It also sends a clear message of support from our Connecticut legislators and would be the first step in protecting against our employees' work related conditions not being properly cared for. Lastly, it will help ensure that they receive the proper treatment they need and deserve.*

February 25, 2016

Andrew Matthews, Esq.  
President, Connecticut State Police Union

