



Testimony of Lori J. Pelletier, President
Connecticut AFL-CIO
Before the Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 25th, 2016

Senator Gomes and Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, on behalf of the over 200,000 union members and their families in our great state we present written testimony on:

Raised H. B. 5262 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR CURRENT AND FORMER UNIFORMED MEMBERS OF PAID OR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS.

We support this legislation. Everyday currant or retired firefighters get diagnosed with life threatening diseases which are a result of the job they held. Sadly because these diagnoses cannot be tied to specific fire, these heroes are left without protection. It saddens all of us when a firefighter gets killed on the job. We see dignitaries, fellow firefighters, and the public turnout to the wakes and funerals to show their support. But what about the firefighter who years earlier went into a fire where toxic chemicals were stored, or where asbestos was used, or where the fire was so intense that it melted the steel building products and is now diagnosed with a fatal disease? Why should that firefighter's family be protected at a lower value? Firefighters don't ask for an inventory of a building when it's burning they just respond to the alarm. Well now the alarm is ringing for them and it's your turn to respond. Firefighters are a different breed of citizens, when everyone else is running from a burning building, they are running into the fire. I know that if I'm ever in a life threatening situation I hope that there is a firefighter in the room, because I know he or she won't let me down in my time of need. Please don't you, let them down in their time of need.

I thank you for holding this ever so important public hearing.

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