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## OLR Bill Analysis

### sSB 164

#### ***AN ACT INCLUDING CERTAIN MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF "PERSONAL INJURY" UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION STATUTES.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill makes police officers and firefighters eligible for full workers' compensation benefits (i.e., wage replacement and medical benefits) if:

1. while engaged in the line of duty, they see a person's death or maiming or its immediate aftermath;
2. the death or maiming was not the result of a natural cause; and
3. a licensed and board certified mental health professional diagnosed the officer or firefighter with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and determined that it originated from seeing the death or maiming, or its immediate aftermath.

Under the bill, "maiming" is the loss of any member or organ and "immediate aftermath" is the scene of the death or maiming within six hours after law enforcement officers secure it.

The bill requires the state, by October 1, 2019, to purchase a workers' compensation insurance policy to cover any claims for benefits under the above conditions. (Such claims would otherwise be covered by the policy of the firefighter's or police officer's employer.)

The bill similarly extends full workers' compensation 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 PTSD caused by witnessing the death of another firefighter in the line of duty. Current law, which the bill repeals, limits benefits in these instances to treatment by an approved

psychologist or psychiatrist and does not include wage replacement benefits.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 12 Nay 2 (03/14/2019)