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Ladies & Gentleman

My name is Gary Smiley and I am here as an Advocate on behalf of the FealGood Foundation & John Feal

I also serve as the WTC liaison for the FDNY Local 2507 Uniformed Paramedics, EMT's & Fire Inspectors and am Retired due to 9/11 illness, a FDNY Rescue Paramedic.

I am here to speak on Public Act 19-17 and Its Exclusion of Connecticut's Paramedics & Emergency Medical Technicians as well as other Key First Responder's such as Corrections Officers and 9/11 Dispatcher's with regard to the Public Act's Workman's Compensation Coverage of Job-related PTSD

Paramedic's & Emt's are Front Line First Responder's just like Firefighter's and Police Officers. These Men and Women, both paid and in many cases Volunteer's respond to and care for Complete Strangers in their time of need, many times on the worst day of these strangers' lives.

This is a Selfless Act, one that Not Every Human Being is capable of doing.

Just as it takes a Special type of person to run into a Burning Building or respond to a Robbery in progress it takes that Same Special type of person to respond to a Medical Emergency. In addition, on many occasions these Medical Emergency's are a Direct Result of that Same Building Fire or Robbery.

Why then would Your Legislative Body Exclude These Heroic Medical Professionals From this Bill and the Coverage it Provides?

I honestly Do Not Have an Answer for that.

I can draw a Parallel to the Horrific and Tragic events that unfolded at Sandy Hook and the Horrific Shooting that took place in Your State. Would You Turn your back on these EMS First Responders?

Should They Not be Eligible after responding to such a Horror, but the Firefighters & Police Officers be Eligible? Did Police & Fire see something that EMS Did Not?

The answer to that Question is a resounding No!!

I can draw another parallel to the NYC Fire Dept. that answers 1.8 million plus calls a year for service, the majority being calls for Emergency Medical Service. Our Members see unimaginable Horror, grief and pain each and every day and that takes its toll.

Thankfully our members covered for illness and Injury like PTSD not only for 12 months as in your Public Act but Covered for Life if necessary.

12 Months is Not Enough may I add but in the case of Emergency Medical Service members there are No Months as you choose Not to Cover them at all.

From what I am understanding from the Paramedic and Emt's Representatives here in Connecticut the Legislature is placing a price tag on their Mental Health and how it would affect the Workman's Compensation Board coverage and payouts and that is Outrageous.

Let's not only work to legislate the Inclusion of Emergency Medical service members in this Public Act but How About extending the Time frame for coverage.

PTSD is not a rash that will go away after a period of time. Yes, affected members will get better but not everyone will.

I will refresh your memory of the Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 attacks and how that affected the entire World of First Responders.

Heaven forbid your State has a similar type of incident or another Horrific event such as sandy Hook

How will these First Responders be looked upon and covered by Your State's Workman's Comp Board ?

I will close by stating and quoting Mr. John Feal who appreciates your time and attention to this matter but who asked me to convey that the FealGood Foundation is prepared to return with Our Army of Advocates to right this wrong.

Thank you for your time

Gary Smiley