

# OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-313

AN ACT CONCERNING ADOPTION OF THE  
RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO STUDY CANCER  
RELIEF BENEFITS FOR FIREFIGHTERS.

## ***OFA Fiscal Note***

### ***State Impact:***

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Firefighters Cancer Relief Account	GF - Appropriation	1.2 million	None
Various State Agencies	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

### ***Municipal Impact:***

Municipalities	Effect	FY 23 \$	FY 24 \$
Various Municipalities	STATE MANDATE <sup>1</sup> - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

### ***Explanation***

The bill, which makes a number of changes related to firefighters and workers' compensation, results in the following fiscal impacts:

**Section 1** requires fire departments to ensure that each firefighter is equipped with at least two sets of turnout gear. Municipalities with paid fire departments will incur costs associated with providing this

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<sup>1</sup> State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

equipment if they do not already do so. Costs will vary based on the number of professional firefighters in each department; the gear typically costs about \$3,000 per set.

**Section 2** (1) establishes a rebuttable presumption that a paid or volunteer firefighter diagnosed with cancer got the disease in the course of employment due to exposures specific to duties performed as a firefighter and (2) makes the illness covered under workers' compensation law. This results in a potential cost to various state agencies and municipalities to the extent that additional employee claims are filed and these employees meet the other conditions of the bill.

**Section 3** requires the Workers' Compensation Commission (WCC) to (a) maintain a record of all firefighters' workers' compensation claims made due to a cancer diagnosis and (b) report a summary of the records to the Labor Committee each year, which results in no fiscal impact because the agency already has the staffing and expertise to do so.

**Sections 4 & 10** make firefighters eligible for benefits from the existing firefighters cancer relief program (or any other wage replacement program) while also receiving workers' compensation benefits for a work-related cancer diagnosis, and appropriate \$1.2 million to the firefighter cancer relief account in FY 23 for this purpose.

**Section 5** makes surviving spouses or other dependents eligible to continue to receive accident, health, or life insurance while they are eligible for, or receiving, workers' compensation benefits. This results in a potential cost of an indeterminate amount to various state agencies and municipalities to the extent that the employer offers such insurance, the claimant is eligible for or granted workers' compensation benefits, and the claimant has a surviving spouse and/or dependents.

**Section 6** requires the Comptroller to conduct a feasibility study on providing pension benefits to firefighters in circumstances when the required pension service years are not met due to early retirement resulting from a qualifying cancer diagnosis, which results in no fiscal

impact because the agency already has the staffing and expertise to do so.

**Sections 7 through 9** clarify that volunteer fire departments and volunteer ambulance companies fall within the state's Occupational Safety and Health Act (Conn-OSHA), unless it is demonstrated that they are under federal OSHA jurisdiction. This does not result in any fiscal impact as the Department of Labor has historically considered such entities within its jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup>

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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<sup>2</sup> From FY 18 through FY 22 year-to-date, these entities have paid between \$800 and \$10,000 annually in OSHA penalties.