
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FIREFIGHTERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

- 1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the risk of being
2 diagnosed with cancer is higher among firefighters than the
3 general population. In a three-year study completed in 2005 by
4 the University of Cincinnati, researchers concluded that
5 firefighters face a higher risk of cancer than the general
6 population. Statistics from this study show that when compared
7 to the general population, the risk for firefighters is:
- 8 (1) One hundred two per cent higher for testicular cancer;
 - 9 (2) Fifty-three per cent higher for multiple myeloma;
 - 10 (3) Fifty-one per cent higher for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma;
 - 11 (4) Thirty-nine per cent higher for skin cancer;
 - 12 (5) Thirty-two per cent higher for brain and malignant
13 melanoma;
 - 14 (6) Twenty-nine per cent higher for rectal cancer;
 - 15 (7) Twenty-eight per cent higher for prostate cancer;
 - 16 (8) Twenty-four per cent higher for buccal cavity and
17 phar anx cancer;



- 1 (9) Twenty-two per cent higher for stomach cancer;
- 2 (10) Twenty-one per cent higher for colon cancer; and
- 3 (11) Fourteen per cent higher for leukemia.

4 Firefighters also face a greater risk of contracting
 5 infectious diseases and illnesses associated with exposure to
 6 patient care and biochemical substances due to bioterrorism.

7 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 8 (1) Provide firefighters with the opportunity to
- 9 collectively bargain for expanded employee benefits to
- 10 mitigate the long-term health effects that may result
- 11 from work-related exposure to hazardous materials; and
- 12 (2) Require the Hawaii state fire council to develop
- 13 minimum statewide standards and procedures to ensure
- 14 the health and safety of firefighters and first
- 15 responders who may be exposed to hazardous materials
- 16 in the course of their duties.

17 SECTION 2. Chapter 89, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
 18 by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to
 19 read as follows:

20 "§89- Long-term health effects; firefighters.

21 Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any collective



1 bargaining agreement for bargaining unit (11), firefighters, may
2 include terms that allow for an expansion of employee benefits
3 to mitigate long-term health effects resulting from work-related
4 exposure to hazardous materials."

5 SECTION 3. (a) The Hawaii state fire council shall
6 develop minimum statewide standards and procedures to ensure the
7 health and safety of firefighters and first responders who are
8 or may be exposed to hazardous materials or situations in the
9 course of their duties. The county fire departments shall take
10 steps to ensure that fire and first responder personnel are
11 trained regularly with regard to these minimum standards and
12 procedures.

13 (b) The county fire departments shall conduct an inventory
14 of fire stations to identify and designate deficiencies to
15 ensure that fire stations meet environmental health and safety
16 standards to mitigate the long-term health effects on fire
17 department and first responder personnel.

18 (c) As part of the minimum standards and procedures, the
19 county fire departments shall require each fire station to
20 employ best practices that limit an employee's exposure to
21 hazardous materials by isolating equipment and material exposed



1 in the field, proper cleaning protocol, and regular testing of
2 the station for contaminants.

3 (d) The Hawaii state fire council shall prepare a report
4 that outlines the progress of the county fire departments in
5 accordance with this Act and submit the report to the
6 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
7 the regular session of 2016.

8 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2015.



Report Title:

Firefighters; Collective Bargaining; Health

Description:

Allows firefighters to collectively bargain for expanded employee benefits to mitigate long-term health effects from work-related exposure to hazardous materials. Requires Hawaii State Fire Council to develop minimum statewide standards and procedures to ensure health and safety of firefighters and first responders exposed to hazardous materials. (HB435 HD1)

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