
SENATE RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ISSUE OF
A CANCER PRESUMPTIVE STATUTE RELATING TO FIREFIGHTERS.

1 WHEREAS, highly concentrated toxicants in the form of
2 plastics and other synthetics often burn in residential or
3 vehicle fires; and

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5 WHEREAS, although fire departments have improved procedures
6 for cleaning firefighters' protective clothing and breathing
7 apparatus, firefighters may still become exposed to carcinogens
8 and toxicants while performing their duties; and

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10 WHEREAS, the exposure to toxicants during a firefighter's
11 career may not result in symptoms or a cancer diagnosis until
12 years after retirement; and

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14 WHEREAS, University of Cincinnati environmental health
15 researchers have determined that firefighters are significantly
16 more likely to develop various types of cancer than workers in
17 other fields; and

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19 WHEREAS, a study released by the University of Cincinnati
20 in 2006 found that, when compared to the general population, the
21 risk for firefighters is:

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23 (1) One hundred two percent higher for testicular cancer;
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25 (2) Fifty-three percent higher for multiple myeloma;
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27 (3) Fifty-one percent higher for non-Hodgkin lymphoma;
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29 (4) Thirty-nine percent higher for skin cancer;
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31 (5) Thirty-two percent higher for brain cancer and
32 malignant melanoma;
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34 (6) Twenty-nine percent higher for rectal cancer;



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- 2 (7) Twenty-eight percent higher for prostate cancer;
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- 4 (8) Twenty-four percent higher for buccal cavity and
- 5 pharynx cancer;
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- 7 (9) Twenty-two percent higher for stomach cancer;
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- 9 (10) Twenty-one percent higher for colon cancer; and
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- 11 (11) Fourteen percent higher for leukemia; and
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13 WHEREAS, a firefighter's cancer diagnosis can also have an
 14 enormous impact on a spouse, children, and other family members,
 15 including a heavy emotional toll, financial costs, and a
 16 decreased quality of life; and

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 18 WHEREAS, thirty-four states and nine Canadian provinces
 19 have enacted cancer presumptive statutes, which create a
 20 presumption that certain types of cancer diagnosed among
 21 firefighters result from their employment as firefighters; now,
 22 therefore,

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 24 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
 25 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016,
 26 that various stakeholders are requested to convene a Firefighter
 27 Cancer Presumptive Task Force (Task Force) to develop
 28 recommendations for the enactment of a cancer presumptive
 29 statute relating to firefighters; and

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 31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force be comprised of:

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- 33 (1) The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Commerce,
- 34 Consumer Protection, and Health, or the Chairperson's
- 35 designee;
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- 37 (2) The Chairperson of the House of Representatives
- 38 Committee on Health, or the Chairperson's designee;
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- 40 (3) The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Judiciary
- 41 and Labor, or the Chairperson's designee;
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- 1 (4) The Chairperson of the House of Representatives
2 Committee on Labor, or the Chairperson's designee;
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- 4 (5) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;
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- 6 (6) The Director of Human Resources Development, or the
7 Director's designee;
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- 9 (7) The Director of Labor and Industrial Relations, or the
10 Director's designee;
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- 12 (8) The Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer
13 Center, or the Director's designee;
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- 15 (9) The Fire Chief from each county, or the Chief's
16 designee;
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- 18 (10) A representative from the Hawaii Employers' Mutual
19 Insurance Company;
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- 21 (11) A representative from the Hawaii Employer-Union Health
22 Benefits Trust Fund;
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- 24 (12) A private attorney familiar with workers' compensation
25 claims;
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- 27 (13) The President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association,
28 or the President's designee; and
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- 30 (14) A representative from the State Fire Council; and
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32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
33 provide a report of its findings and recommendations, including
34 any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than
35 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
36 2017; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include:

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- 40 (1) An analysis of the number of cancer patients among the
41 State's general population as compared to the number
42 who are firefighters;



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- (2) Recommendations, if any, for revisions to workers' compensation statutes to expedite the award of workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;
- (3) An estimate of the cost to the State and counties of workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer;
- (4) Current county fire department safety procedures and protocols related to preventing and reporting firefighter exposure to toxicants; and
- (5) Recommendations, if any, for changes to a fire department's administrative rules to improve workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who are diagnosed with cancer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, and Health; Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Health; Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor; Chairperson of the House of Representatives Committee on Labor; Director of Health; Director of Human Resources Development; Director of Labor and Industrial Relations; Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer Center; Fire Chief of each county; Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Employers' Mutual Insurance Company; Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund; President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association; and Chairperson of the State Fire Council.

