

Good Morning Chairman Barrar, Sainato and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is Donald Konkle. I am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Service Institute and the Law and Legislative Chair of the Fireman's Association of the State of Pennsylvania. I have been involved in the fire service since 1967, including 37 years as a member of the Harrisburg Bureau of Fire; 27 of those years as Chief.

The Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute is opposed to the proposed changes in the Cancer Presumption Law.

After several years of negotiations all parties agreed to a compromise that is represented by the current legislation. Part of that compromise was not to list specific cancers in the law but to accept the cancers that are listed as related to firefighting by experts in cancer research, The International Agency for Research on Cancer. I believe this approach was sound when the bill was passed and continues to be the most reasonable approach.

Additionally, I have a concern that eliminating subrogation will simply provide an incentive to deny firefighters cancer claims. At least once a month I hear from a firefighter with cancer that has had a claim denied by his workers compensation insurance carrier, forcing him to file an appeal while paying for treatment out of pocket, with private health insurance or delaying treatment because of the cost. It seems to me if a worker's compensation insurance trusts or companies can deny a claim and therefore delay paying medical claims while the case is appealed without the fear of subrogation this will provide an additional financial incentive to increase the number of denials.

I am unsure of what the changes on page 2 lines 13 to 19 are meant to accomplish. The current language appears to be understood and has been in use since the law was passed. A change will simply result in more appeals as the interpretation of the changes is battled by attorneys while firefighters wait for treatment.

Thank You for the opportunity to testify. I will be pleased to take any questions.