



## Presentation of Comments

Prepared

by

Art Martynuska

President

Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association

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Chairman Barrar, Chairman Sainato, Honorable Representatives, my name is Art Martynuska, I have the honor to serve as the President of the Pennsylvania Professional Fire Fighters Association.

Previous to my tenure with the PPFPA I employed as a fire fighter/paramedic in the City of Johnstown retiring as an Assistant Fire Chief.

The PPFPA is the state affiliate of the International Association of Fire Fighters. Our organization represents over 10,000 active and retired fire fighters, EMT's and Paramedics across the Commonwealth. On a daily basis members of the PPFPA are protecting over 34% of the citizens in our great state.

Our dedicated emergency responders cover the width and breadth of the state serving in townships, boroughs, cities of every class and three standalone airports; Pittsburgh International, Harrisburg International and Lehigh Valley International.

Philadelphia to Erie and Scranton to Pittsburgh in 33 counties members of the PPFPA go to work every day under grueling conditions performing heroic lifesaving duties for residents and visitors to their communities and facilities.

I come before you today representing my constituents and your home town heroes. I have the honor to represent and work beside men and women who race towards, not away from danger.

The membership of the PPFPA stands in support of House Bill 2148, which has been offered by Representative Frank Farry.

This piece of legislation will solidify protections provided for those responders who are injured in the performance of their valiant duties.

Emergency responders are, by the nature of their employment, exposed to a constantly dangerous and unstable work environments. Contact to heat, fire, byproducts of combustion, hazardous materials, communicable diseases, blood borne pathogens, climatic extremes and punishing physical exertion are just a few of the dangers we incessantly face in our profession.

The PPFPA applauds Representative Farry for his recognition of the gaps in the current legislation. We also acknowledge and are grateful to the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee for taking up the legislation.

The clarifications that are housed in HB 2148 will insure that those emergency responders who so valiantly provide invaluable services to the residents of Pennsylvania will not fall through those gaps in the future.

HB 2148 strengthens the safety net that you, the state legislature, had the foresight to provide under the original auspices of the "Heart and Lung", act.

HB 2148 is a way of substantially and proactively providing security to the Pennsylvania's first line of defense.

We are respectfully and humbly asking for your support on this essential piece of legislation.