

SB 507 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Workforce

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Meeting Dates: 3/19, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Presumes death, disability, or impairment of health for firefighters, police, and employees with duties related to firefighting, police, ambulance or emergency medical services is a compensable occupational disease if caused by mental or emotional trauma or a stress-induced disorder and specified conditions are met.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Current claims process for police or firefighter affected by response to traumatic critical incident
- Effect of a rebuttable presumption

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Workers' compensation insurance provides benefits to employees who suffer from an injury that occurs at work. The system also provides benefits for an occupational disease that is caused by substances or activities to which the employee would not ordinarily be subjected to or exposed to other than during work. The worker has the burden to prove that employment conditions were the major contributing cause of the occupational disease. There is a statutory presumption that any disease of the lungs or respiratory tract, hypertension, or cardiovascular-renal disease, and specified cancers are an occupational disease if the person worked at least five years as a firefighter.

Senate Bill 507 presumes that death, disability, or impairment caused by certain mental or emotional trauma or by a stress-related disorder is a compensable occupational disease for fire service professionals, public safety personnel, or employees of a public or private safety agency with job duties related to firefighting, police, ambulance, or emergency medical services.