

Submitter: Tina Wileman

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General
Government, and Veterans

Measure: HB2701

Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2701

Tina Wileman

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My name is Tina Wileman and I am testifying today in favor of House Bill 2701. I have worked as a police telecommunicator for over 17 years.

The noble people who are employed to be telecommunicators work in an equally stressful job class as the brave people who work in police and fire positions. Therefore, they should be referred to as 'eligible employees', including them in the retirement benefits as described in House Bill 2701.

Telecommunicators are critical to police and fire personnel's daily duties. Each contact police and fire make with the public is recorded audibly and in text by the telecommunicator. The job of the telecommunicator requires organization, multitasking, and accuracy with speed all while under pressure of stress.

The responsibility, and liability, the telecommunicator carries is paramount to ensure safety of individuals working in police and fire positions. As a telecommunicator we record the location of all the incidents that police and fire respond to as well as advising them if the person they are in contact with is wanted by the law. The telecommunicator is always responsible to keep track of more than one police and fire unit, usually an average of 20 units at one time. (Carter, 1981)

The likelihood of the telecommunicator to encounter multiple critical incidences in a single shift is astronomically higher than the individual that work in police and fire. Each telecommunicator is responsible for an average of 20 police and fire units. This increases the chances of a telecommunicator experiencing a critical incident exponentially. Critical incidents such as domestics, shootings, residence fires, horrific crashes. During the critical incident its common that the telecommunicator would be on the phone with the effected party, listening to the atrocities happen. (Creative, 2021)

A telecommunicators has a much higher propensity to develop stress related health illnesses during their career. Telecommunicators do not witness the critical

incidences in person however, we are at a high risk of developing PTSD by experiencing vicarious trauma. In order for a telecommunicator to avoid stress related health injuries we must diligently practice self-care. (Frazier, 2013)

I want to thank you for your time today. I would ask that you support House Bill 2701. I further invite you to join me at my job for a first-hand experience of what I have spoken of here today.

Again, thank you for allowing my written testimony today.

Tina Wileman
Department of Public Safety Standards & Training #46288

Recourses:

Carter, E. E. (1981). National Emergency Number Association. Retrieved March 23, 2023, from <https://nena.org/>

Creative, T. I. A. G. (2021, August 9). Emergency dispatchers and vicarious trauma: It's real and it matters. mResilience. Retrieved March 22, 2023, from <https://www.mresilience.net/insights/emergency-dispatchers-and-vicarious-trauma-its-real-and-it-matters-1>

Frazier, A. (2013, May 13). Management: 911 for emergency dispatchers. icma.org. Retrieved March 22, 2023, from <https://icma.org/articles/pm-magazine/management-911-emergency-dispatchers>