
HOUSE CONCURRENT 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) 102 percent higher for testicular cancer;
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25 (2) 53 percent higher for multiple myeloma;
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27 (3) 51 percent higher for non-Hodgkin lymphoma;
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29 (4) 39 percent higher for skin cancer;
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31 (5) 32 percent higher for brain cancer and malignant
32 melanoma;



1 (6) 29 percent higher for rectal cancer;

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3 (7) 28 percent higher for prostate cancer;

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5 (8) 24 percent higher for buccal cavity and pharynx
6 cancer;

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8 (9) 22 percent higher for stomach cancer;

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10 (10) 21 percent higher for colon cancer; and

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12 (11) 14 percent higher for leukemia; and
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14 WHEREAS, firefighters also face a greater risk of
15 contracting infectious diseases and illnesses associated with
16 exposure to patient care and biochemical substances due to
17 bioterrorism; and
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19 WHEREAS, a firefighter's cancer diagnosis can also have an
20 enormous impact on the firefighter's spouse, children, and other
21 family members, including a heavy emotional toll, financial
22 costs, and a decreased quality of life; and
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24 WHEREAS, some states have enacted cancer presumptive
25 statutes, which create a presumption that certain types of
26 cancer diagnosed among firefighters result from their employment
27 as firefighters; now, therefore,
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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
30 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
31 Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that various
32 stakeholders are requested to convene a Firefighter Cancer
33 Presumptive Task Force (Task Force) to develop recommendations
34 for the enactment of a cancer presumptive statute relating to
35 firefighters; and
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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall be
38 comprised of:
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40 (1) The Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Health, or
41 the Chairperson's designee;

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43 (2) The Chairperson of the House Committee on Health, or
44 the Chairperson's designee;



- 1 (3) The Director of Health, or the Director's designee;
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- 3 (4) The Director of Human Resources Development, or the
- 4 Director's designee;
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- 6 (5) The Administrator of the Disability Compensation
- 7 Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial
- 8 Relations, or the Administrator's representative;
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- 10 (6) The Director of the University of Hawaii Cancer
- 11 Center, or the Director's designee;
- 12
- 13 (7) The Director of the department that oversees human
- 14 resources for each county, or the Director's designee;
- 15
- 16 (8) A representative from the health insurance industry;
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- 18 (9) A private attorney familiar with workers' compensation
- 19 claims;
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- 21 (10) The President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters Association,
- 22 or the President's designee; and
- 23
- 24 (11) A representative from the State Fire Council; and
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26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall select a
27 chairperson from among its members; and

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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing its
30 recommendations for enactment of a cancer presumptive statute,
31 the Task Force include:

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- 33 (1) An analysis of the number of cancer patients among the
- 34 State's general population as compared to the number
- 35 who are firefighters;
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- 37 (2) Recommendations, if any, for revisions to workers'
- 38 compensation statutes to expedite the award of
- 39 workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who
- 40 are diagnosed with cancer;
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- 42 (3) An estimate of the cost to the State and counties of
- 43 workers' compensation benefits for firefighters who
- 44 are diagnosed with cancer;



1 (4) Current county fire department safety procedures and
2 protocols related to preventing and reporting
3 firefighter exposure to toxicants; and
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5 (5) Recommendations, if any, for changes to a fire
6 department's administrative rules to improve workers'
7 compensation benefits for firefighters who are
8 diagnosed with cancer; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force is requested to
11 provide a report of its findings and recommendations, including
12 any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than
13 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
14 2016; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
17 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
18 Senate Committee on Health, Chairperson of the House Committee
19 on Health, Director of Health, Administrator of the Disability
20 Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial
21 Relations, Director of Human Resources Development, Director of
22 the University of Hawaii Cancer Center, Director of the
23 department that oversees human resources for each county, Fire
24 Chief of each county, President of the Hawaii Fire Fighters
25 Association, and Chair of the State Fire Council.

