

Federal Fire Fighter Presumptive Disability

Offered by

The International Association of Fire Fighters

The International Association of Fire Chiefs

The National Volunteer Fire Council

The International Association of Arson Investigators

Whereas, fire fighting is an inherently dangerous profession that routinely includes exposure to smoke, toxic substances, stress, temperature extremes, and bloodborne and airborne pathogens; and

Whereas, exposures to such hazards have been linked to a variety of illnesses including heart and lung disease, cancer and infectious disease; and

Whereas, numerous medical studies have shown that fire fighters have elevated rates of such illnesses; and

Whereas, in recognition that certain illnesses are occupational hazards of firefighting, 40 states have enacted presumptive disability legislation for their municipal fire fighters, which presumes that such illnesses are job-related in the absence of evidence to the contrary; and

Whereas, more than 10,000 fire fighters are employed by the federal government, protecting military installations, veterans hospitals, and other crucial federal facilities; and

Whereas, federal disability benefits do not officially recognize any illnesses as being an occupational hazard of fire fighting; and

Whereas, in order to qualify for job-related death or disability benefits, federal fire fighters or their survivors must be able to pinpoint the precise exposure that caused the illness;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the National Advisory Council of the Congressional Fire Services Institute endorses the Federal Fire Fighters Fairness Act, which would provide presumptive disability benefits to federal fire fighters similar to laws covering municipal fire fighters in 40 states.