



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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To: Steve Peters, Chair
Members, Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Advisory Council

From: Sen. André Jacque
Sen. Van Wanggaard
Sen. Kelda Roys
Rep. Jeffrey Mursau

Date: November 15, 2023

Re: Request PTSD Coverage for All EMS and Fire Personnel

As sponsors of 2023 Senate Bill 113, we are asking the Workers Compensation Advisory Council to please consider including provisions changing conditions of liability for worker's compensation benefits to recognize post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for emergency medical service practitioners and fire fighters, regardless of their level of employment or volunteer status.

It is our understanding that there may not be settlement yet in the negotiation process of the proposed advisory council bill on the issue of PTSD. And, while all vocations identified in Senate Bill 113 are important, in an effort to assist with trying to find a balance of compromise and recognizing what is likely a priority to many in the State Legislature - we ask that the advisory council please consider narrowing and including in the council bill recognition of the dangers we ask our state fire fighters and emergency medical service practitioners to put themselves into to serve all of us – and include for all emergency medical service practitioners and fire fighters the same standard of worker's compensation coverage policy provided for law enforcement officers and full-time fire fighters and emergency medical service practitioners affiliated with a fire department that are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), similar to what was provided in 2021 Wisconsin Act 29.

Over 75 percent of EMS and fire departments rely on volunteers to serve their community and that percentage is higher when there is a combination of full-time, paid-on-call, or volunteer members. Regardless, all the men and women who serve provide the same emergency care and response as their EMS-firefighter affiliated contemporaries.

While part of the discussion is about fairness – it is also about ensuring that Wisconsin's fire and EMS departments can successfully recruit and retain to continue being able to respond to emergency situations, but to also maintain associated lower municipal tax levy that our residents and employers benefit with this current structure.

Again, in the interest of finding compromise and recognizing the inherent hazards of emergency response please consider narrowing and focusing the tenants of SB-113 by extending to all emergency medical service practitioners and fire fighters the same standard of worker's compensation coverage policy provided for law enforcement officers and full-time fire fighters and EMS affiliated with a fire department that are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), similar to what was provided in 2021 Wisconsin Act 29.