

March 25, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5701 – AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- CANCER BENEFITS FOR FIRE FIGHTERS

Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I am writing to express our concern regarding House Bill 5701. This bill proposes to make the provisions of §§ 45-19.1-3 and 45-19.1-4, which provide benefits for firefighters with cancer, effective regardless of any general, special, or specific law, charter, or municipal ordinance to the contrary.

We deeply appreciate the dedication and service of our public safety officials, including firefighters, and recognize the importance of ensuring they receive the proper benefits, especially in cases of serious health concerns like cancer. The health and well-being of our first responders are of utmost importance, and we are committed to supporting efforts that provide them with the necessary resources and benefits.

However, we are concerned about the potential impact this bill may have on municipalities. While we understand and support the intent of the legislation, we want to ensure that any changes to the law are carefully considered to avoid unintended consequences on local governments and their ability to manage benefits programs.

We stand ready to work with the sponsor of this bill to better understand the proposed changes and to ensure that any adjustments are made in a way that addresses the needs of our firefighters while also considering the fiscal and operational realities faced by municipalities.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important issue. We look forward to further discussion and collaboration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing