

HOUSE BILL NO. 628

INTRODUCED BY T. STEENBERG

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REQUIRING THE INSURANCE COMMISSIONER TO CONVENE AN ADVISORY COUNCIL TO STUDY THE CREATION OF A STATEWIDE FIREFIGHTER PRESUMPTIVE ILLNESS PROGRAM; REQUIRING A REPORT; APPROPRIATING AND AUTHORIZING THE USE OF FUNDS FOR CONDUCTING THE STUDY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

WHEREAS, Montana firefighters work hard each and every day, proudly protecting and serving the citizens of Montana by answering the call for help--a call to save lives; and

WHEREAS, Montana firefighters are at an increased risk of exposure to various carcinogens and therefore have an increased risk of developing certain cancers, heart disease, and infectious diseases; and

WHEREAS, 46 states throughout the United States have recognized the inherent danger in firefighting activities and the increased risks and exposures to firefighters and have instituted some form of presumptive illness program for firefighters; and

WHEREAS, firefighters with a career of service to Montana communities have a significantly higher mortality rate and shorter life expectancy.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**NEW SECTION. Section 1. Firefighter presumptive health care -- advisory council.** (1) The insurance commissioner shall convene an advisory council to review the costs, benefits, and procedural and technical requirements necessary to design, implement, and maintain a statewide presumptive illness program for firefighters.

(2) The commissioner and advisory council shall investigate the following matters related to firefighter presumptive illness programs:

- (a) specific strategies for measuring and collecting data on the administration, outcomes, and cost of a firefighter presumptive illness program;
- (b) data elements that foster improvements and peer group comparisons;
- (c) usable and comparable information from other states, workers' compensation providers, health care

1 providers, and health insurers related to the cost-effective and efficient administration of firefighter presumptive  
2 illness programs;

3 (d) standards or methods for establishing and maintaining presumptive illness claims that are utilized  
4 by existing firefighter presumptive illness programs;

5 (e) the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of providing a firefighter presumptive illness program; and

6 (f) any other information that the commissioner and advisory council considers relevant to the creation  
7 and funding of a statewide firefighter presumptive illness program.

8 (3) The commissioner shall report by August 31, 2014, to the state administration and veterans' affairs  
9 interim committee on the findings of the advisory council's investigation and on any recommendations for action  
10 by the legislature in 2015.

11  
12 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Appropriation and authorization.** The insurance commissioner is  
13 authorized to expend \$1,000 in each of the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2013, and July 1, 2014, for a biennial  
14 total of \$2,000. These funds are appropriated from the state special revenue fund credited to the state auditor's  
15 office and must be used exclusively for paying the costs associated with the study of a statewide firefighter  
16 presumptive illness program as provided in [section 1].

17

18 NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2013.

19

20 NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Termination.** [This act] terminates December 31, 2014.

21

- END -