

HB 1985 -- WORKERS COMPENSATION

SPONSOR: Ellington

Currently, the law provides that certain diseases of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems, including carcinoma, may be recognized as occupational diseases if a paid firefighter is exposed to certain substances. This bill includes volunteer firefighters in this definition of occupational disease.

The bill also provides for a rebuttable presumption that a paid or volunteer firefighter who contracts cancer has a compensable occupational disease under certain circumstances. The presumption arises if the firefighter was exposed to a known carcinogen or cancer-causing agent, and has been assigned to at least five years of hazardous duty as a firefighter. These provisions apply to claims filed on or after August 28, 2018.

The bill also requires the Division of Workers' Compensation to prepare a biannual report for several recipients including but not limited to the Speaker and the minority leader of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem and the minority leader of the Senate containing specified information about presumed cancer claims filed under the provisions of this bill.

This bill is similar to HB 1641 and SB 621 (2018), and HB 482 (2017).