

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Sponsor Statement

HB 149

"An Act making firefighters employed by the state eligible for the presumption of coverage under workers' compensation for disability due to certain diseases."

HB 149 corrects an oversight in AS 23.30.121 "Presumption of coverage for disability from diseases for certain firefighters". Section "F" of AS 23.30.121 says the definition of firefighter has the meaning given in AS 09.65.295. Under AS 09.65.265 section "C" the meaning of firefighter only applies to municipal fire departments or a member of a volunteer fire department.

This bill would provide presumptive protection for all State Employed firefighters, many of whom work at our airports where they risk exposure to chemicals and disease hazards. HB 149 is a "fix-it" bill that would simply amend AS 23.30.121 adding line 4 to read "a firefighter employed by the state". I believe these brave men and woman should have the same protection as all firefighters.

I urge you to support this legislation.