

# Maryland State Firefighters Association

Representing The Volunteer Fire, Rescue, And EMS Personnel of Maryland.



Legislative Committee  
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## **HB1389: Public Safety Officer - Performance of Duties - Death Benefit**

My name is Robert Phillips, I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA). The MSFA represents the 25,000 plus volunteer Fire/EMS and Rescue first responders across the state.

I wish to present testimony in favor of House Bill 1389: Public Safety Officer - Performance of Duties - Death Benefit

The MSFA fully supports the bill before you with the amendments provided by Delegate Lehman. Our volunteers are asked to respond and react to the same emergencies that career first responders are and to face the same physical and mental stresses. This bill will expand the benefits to include disabilities that come from the rigors of being a first responder including the mental trauma of diagnosed disabilities such as PTSD. PTSD related suicide has become the number one reason for firefighter deaths. We now lose more firefighters to suicide than we do to fire related emergencies. It is time we address the issue and take care of those who have been affected.

Thank you for your attention to this very important bill and I ask for your favorable report on HB 1389.

I will be glad to answer any questions you may have for me.

