



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Chairwoman Kelley, Vice-Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,**

**I am proud to present to you today Senate Bill 756 which deals with an issue that you all are very familiar with, presumptions in workers' compensation. This bill is specifically targeted at our brave men and women who have put their lives on the lines every single day since we all first learned the word coronavirus. Doctors, nurses, paramedics, police officers, firefighters, and so many more have risked their lives every single day to save ours. We can never say thank you enough.**

**Senate Bill 756 establishes a presumption for purposes of workers compensation that an individual in one of a number of front-line professions who contracts Covid did so at their profession. The presumption, like others in our law, may be rebutted by evidence. But the presumption takes this burden of persuasion off of the frontline worker and permits easier compensation for their injury. And we all know that a growing body of evidence suggests some long-lasting health effects for contracting Covid.**

**We are not breaking any new ground in this legislation. As you know, paid firefighters, police officers, sheriffs, correctional officers, and others have various presumptions for purposes of workers compensation such as heart disease, hypertension, and lung disease. Section 9-503 of the Labor and Employment Article lists in great detail a number of these current presumptions under the law.**


**Senate Bill 756, like several other like bills you are hearing today, lists a number of individuals who have been on the front line of the fight against Covid such as health care workers, police officers, firefighters and paramedics, workers in long-term care facilities, and more. The bill creates that rebuttable presumption for those workers under certain circumstances that the illness contracted was done so at their employment for purposes of compensation under workers comp.**

**The bills you are hearing today differ in a few ways. One is who would be covered. I believe that this Committee should look to the broadest definition of our frontline workers. I am not wedded to my particular list although it is a solid group. The more important difference is in the area of prospective versus retroactivity. On this issue, I hope this Committee will look to my language, and ensure that anyone infected beginning from March of this past year until the present and beyond will be able to use this presumption. If this bill is prospective only, the hurdle of proof for these brave individuals will simply be too high.**

**Senators, we all have suffered this past year in so many ways. But none more so on a day-to-day basis than our incredible heroes and heroes on the frontline. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude, and Senate Bill 756 would be a small way to say thank you.**

**I appreciate your consideration and support for Senate Bill 756.**

**Respectfully,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jill P. Carter**