



WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

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ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND
21401-1925

February 28, 2024

The Honorable C.T. Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee
Room 231, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Honorable Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

On behalf of Governor Wes Moore, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 584, titled Caring for Public Employees in the Safety Professions or the CAPES Act.

The CAPES Act continues the extraordinary work this committee has done over the years to ensure that our worker's compensation laws adequately recognize the severe occupational risks faced by Maryland first responders. Current law identifies several cancers that are presumptively considered occupationally related for the purposes of worker's compensation, including leukemia, prostate, rectal, throat, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, brain, testicular, bladder, kidney, renal cell, or breast cancers. The CAPES Act expands that list to also include presumptions for thyroid, colon, and ovarian cancers. The science surrounding these three additional classes of cancers has become increasingly clear, and it is time for Maryland to add them to the list of cancer presumptions.

First responders, including firefighters, police officers, and other emergency personnel, routinely put themselves in harm's way to protect our communities. They face numerous hazards, including exposure to toxic substances and carcinogens, which can have serious long-term health consequences. By adding thyroid, colon, and ovarian cancers as occupational diseases, HB 584 ensures that these brave individuals are appropriately supported if they develop such conditions as a result of their service.

On behalf of the Moore/Miller Administration, I urge a favorable report on HB 584.

Yours in Service,

Eric Luedtke
Chief Legislative Officer