



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**SB 374 - Counties - Cancer Screening for Professional Firefighters - Required Coverage
(James "Jimmy" Malone Act)
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 27, 2025**

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 374 My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Firefighters risk their lives daily, battling fires and enduring exposure to toxic chemicals and fumes, as a result, they experience a significantly higher rate of cancer. In 2023, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) reported that 72% of member line-of-duty deaths were due to occupational cancer¹, emphasizing the need for early detection and prevention.

SB 374 eliminates financial barriers to preventative cancer screenings for professional firefighters. This bill requires counties to provide firefighters employed by the county coverage for preventative cancer screenings, free of cost, without copayment, coinsurance, or a deductible requirement.

Firefighters dedicate their lives to protecting our communities and should not have to choose between their health and financial stability. Given the nature of their profession and its heightened risk, we have an opportunity to provide them with the best possible preventative care.

SB 374 works toward reducing firefighter cancer mortality and ensures they receive the medical attention they deserve. For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 374.

¹ "Fire Fighter Cancer Awareness Month." International Association of Fire Fighters. 2023.