

# FPF Legislative Session Report

February 12-16, 2018



We have now completed six weeks of the legislative session, which leaves three weeks remaining in the regular session. The committee process is quickly coming to an end. With the exception of Appropriations and Rules, most committees will not meet after next week.

Words cannot express the sadness and heartache we are feeling as a result of the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone affected by this horrific act as their lives are forever changed. We must strengthen our resolve to assist our members on the front line, support staff, and dispatch personnel that are dealing with the aftermath.

Two of our priority issues continued moving with both getting a hearing, one in the House and one in the Senate. The Post Traumatic Stress bill by Representative Willhite was heard and passed out of Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee Tuesday with a unanimous vote. HB 227 has over 50 bipartisan co-sponsors and one more committee stop.

Repeated exposures to traumatic events, combined with stressful workplace conditions, result in a significant increase in trauma-related disorders. Given the extraordinary trauma load of the fire service, it makes sense that the firefighter rates of PTSD would be higher than civilian rates of PTSD.

Several studies over the last 15 years have evaluated the incidence of PTSD using the Impact of Event Scale or IES, a self-report measure that assesses intrusive and avoidable experiences after a stressful life event. The general consensus is that approximately 22% of firefighters experience full-blown PTSD at some point in their career. Under current law, when first responders are diagnosed with job-related PTSD, they face a system that is stacked against them. HB 227 makes great strides toward removing these hurdles, which will allow first responders to get time off, receive the necessary treatment, and return to work.

Our Cancer Bill, SB 900 by Senator Flores, passed out of Community Affairs Tuesday with another unanimous vote. We cannot stress enough – this is a cancer coverage bill and not a presumption bill. We continue working each and every day to refine the language and determine the cost to keep this bill moving.

The latest strike all for SB 900 specifically covers twenty-one cancers and provides that the employer must apply leave time/job retention policies as if the cancer were a line of duty injury. The bill also provides for death and disability from cancer to be in the line of duty and requires best practices for cancer reduction and prevention.

Our local bills continue to move; HB 1141 Firefighters' Relief and Pension Fund of the City of Pensacola and HB 1139 City Pension Fund for Firefighters and Police Officers in the City of Tampa are on the Special Order Calendar. After the House passes these bills, they will be sent to the Senate.

In addition to Vice President Rocco Salvatori and Secretary/Treasurer Gilbert Marsh we had 3<sup>rd</sup> DVP Bernoska, 5<sup>th</sup> DVP Watler, and 9<sup>th</sup> DVP Vroman that traveled to Tallahassee; their assistance is greatly appreciated.

## Retirement

### [SB 1758 Special Risk Class \(Montford\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 493 \(Diaz\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

2/16/2018 SENATE On Committee agenda - Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government, 02/21/18, 4:00 pm, 301 S.

## Safety and Health

### [SB 900 Firefighters \(Flores\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 695 \(C. Latvala\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

2/13/2018 SENATE Favorable with CS by Community Affairs; 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. 2/13/2018 SENATE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed. 2/15/2018 SENATE Reference to Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government removed; Remaining reference: Appropriations. 2/15/2018 SENATE Now in Appropriations.

## Workers Compensation

### [HB 227 Workers' Compensation Benefits for First Responders \(Willhite\)](#)

[Companion Bills: SB 126 \(Torres, Jr.\), HB 629 \(Asencio\), SB 376 \(Book\)](#)

[FPF Position: Support](#)

2/13/2018 HOUSE Favorable with CS by Government Operations & Technology Appropriations Subcommittee; 11 Yeas, 0 Nays. 2/16/2018 HOUSE Committee Substitute Text (C2) Filed.

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## Watch Bills

### [SB 474 Physician Orders for Life-sustaining Treatment \(Brandes\)](#)

[Companion Bill: SB 476 \(Brandes\)](#)

2/14/2018 HOUSE Temporarily Postponed by Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services.

### [SB 1006 Disaster Response and Preparedness \(Montford\)](#)

[Companion Bill: HB 1443 \(Alexander\)](#)

2/14/2018 SENATE Now in Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development.

### [HB 1395 City of Marco Island, Collier County \(Rommel\)](#)

City of Marco Island, Collier County: Provides exception to general law; authorizes DOH to grant license to City of Marco Island to provide certain emergency medical transportation services; requires referendum. Effective Date: upon its approval by a majority vote of those qualified electors residing within the City of Marco Island voting in a referendum to be held in conjunction with a general, special, or other election. 1/9/2018 HOUSE Filed. 1/12/2018 HOUSE Referred to Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee; Health & Human Services Committee; Government Accountability Committee. 1/12/2018 HOUSE Now in Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee. 1/22/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, 01/24/18, 8:30 am, 12 H. 1/24/2018 HOUSE Favorable by Local, Federal & Veterans Affairs Subcommittee; 12 Yeas, 0 Nays. 1/24/2018 HOUSE Now in Health & Human Services Committee. 2/13/2018 HOUSE On Committee agenda - Health & Human Services Committee; 02/15/18, 8:30 am, 17 H. 2/15/2018 HOUSE Favorable by Health & Human Services Committee; 15 Yeas, 1 Nay. 2/15/2018 HOUSE Now in Government Accountability Committee.