



April 25, 2012

**CALIFORNIA
STATE
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES**

The Honorable Jose Solorio
Chair, Assembly Insurance Committee
1020 N Street, Room 369
Sacramento, CA 95814



**LEAGUE OF
CALIFORNIA
CITIES**

**Re: AB 2451 (Pérez, John A.): Workers' compensation: firefighters
As amended April 19, 2012 – OPPOSE
Set for Hearing May 2, 2012 – Assembly Insurance Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Solorio:



**REGIONAL
COUNCIL OF
RURAL COUNTIES**

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC), the League of California Cities (LCC), the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) and the Association of California Healthcare Districts (ACHD) regret that we must **OPPOSE** AB 2451 by Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez, which would extend the statute of limitations for a presumptive death benefit claim to be filed on behalf of a firefighter or peace officer.



Current law requires death benefit claims for workers' compensation to be commenced within one year of: the date of death when death occurs within one year from the date of injury; the date of the last furnishing of workers' compensation benefits when death occurs more than one year from the date of injury; or, the date of death when death occurs more than one year after the date of injury and workers' compensation benefits have been furnished. Current law additionally requires that no claims may commence unless the death has occurred within 240 weeks of the date of injury, except for claims involving death from asbestosis or HIV. AB 2451 expands this timeline for firefighters and peace officers by allowing their beneficiaries to file a death benefits claim up to one year after the date of death without a limit on the period of time between the employee's exposure to and presumable death from heart disease, cancer, tuberculosis or blood borne pathogens.



**CALIFORNIA
SPECIAL
DISTRICTS
ASSOCIATION**

We believe that liberal standards for public safety officers already allow employees to get fairly compensated on the basis of a disease presumption when that injury is presumed to have job causation. Additionally, the injuries covered in AB 2451 do not have the same close connection to work exposures as do asbestosis and HIV, making it nearly impossible for employers to refute the claim.



**ASSOCIATION OF
CALIFORNIA
HEALTHCARE
DISTRICTS**

AB 2451 would increase workers' compensation costs for counties alone by roughly \$60 million annually (based on an estimate of a \$20 million cost increase to Los Angeles County by the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office Risk Management Branch) at a time when local governments are struggling to provide vital services. This bill also erodes the original intent of the Workers' Compensation Act and subsequent reforms to the system enacted in 2004, designed to provide fair and timely benefits to injured employees at a reasonable cost to employers.

For these reasons, the aforementioned organizations oppose AB 2451. Please do not hesitate to contact Eraina Ortega (CSAC) at 916/650-8180, Paul A. Smith (RCRC) at 916/447-4806, Natasha Karl (LCC) at 916/658-8279, Iris Herrera-Whitney (CSDA) at 916/442-7887 and Amber Wiley (ACHD) at 916/498-6233 should you have any questions or concerns.

cc: The Honorable John A. Pérez, Speaker, California State Assembly
Members and Consultants, Assembly Insurance Committee