



HOUSE BILL 276: Align Benefits for Firefighters with Cancer.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Pensions and Retirement. If favorable, re-refer to Appropriations. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 7, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. B. Jones, Cairns, Clampitt, K. Hall	Prepared by:	Stewart Sturkie Committee Co-Counsel
Analysis of:	First Edition		

OVERVIEW: House Bill 276 would expand eligibility of individuals for benefits through the Public Safety Employees' Death Benefits Act, by covering a firefighter whose diagnosis with cancer would qualify that firefighter for benefits through the Firefighters' Cancer Insurance Program (the Program) or the Firefighters' Health Benefits Pilot Program. House Bill 276 would also add definitions to Article 86A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes, as well as make technical changes.

CURRENT LAW:

- G.S. 143-166.2(6) currently defines the death of a firefighter as occurring within the line of duty if the firefighter's death occurs due to mesothelioma, testicular cancer, cancer of the small intestine, esophageal cancer, oral cavity cancer, and pharynx cancer.
- Article 86A of Chapter 58 is a codification of S.L. 2024-29, Section 10.1. That session law created the Program. Article 86A will become effective July 1, 2025.

BILL ANALYSIS:

- **Section 1:** would add a sub-subdivision to G.S. 143-166.2(6), which would define the death of a firefighter to be in the line of duty if:
 - A firefighters' death occurred due to any cancer that qualified that firefighter for benefits under the Program, and for which the firefighter received benefits from the Program.
- **Section 2.(a):** would add a new section to Article 86A of Chapter 58 of the General Statutes. This section would deem a firefighter's receipt of benefits under the Firefighters' Health Benefits Pilot Program as a receipt under the Program.
- **Section 2.(b):** would make multiple technical corrections to G.S. 58-86A-1, and also would add language stating that the Program is a permanent continuation of the Firefighters' Health Benefits Pilot Program. It would also add language instructing the State Fire Marshal to contract with a third-party administrator instead of purchasing commercial insurance for the Program.
- **Section 2.(c):** would add definitions for "Firefighters' Health Benefits Pilot Program" and "Program" to Article 86A.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act would be effective July 1, 2025, and would apply to qualifying deaths occurring on or after that date.

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Legislative Analysis
Division