

2025 Issues of United Concern Agenda

1. MAKE PERMANENT EMS COST RECOVERY:

This law, which has been in effect for four years, enables fire departments, which were previously not allowed to bill for ambulance services, to start doing so. We will seek the introduction and passage of legislation to make the law permanent. *S.4930/A.4044 (Martinez/Jones)*

2. DESIGNATE EMS AS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE AND EXPAND THE BENEFITS AVAILABLE TO EMS PERSONNEL AND SET STANDARDS FOR EMS:

Recognizes EMS as an essential service, establishes a special district for the financing and operation of general ambulance services, expands access to health insurance and retirement benefits available to EMS providers. *Health Executive Budget Bill Part R*

3. MAKE PERMANENT HEART AND LUNG PRESUMPTION:

Seek legislation to make permanent laws relating to a presumption in favor of line of duty disability due to heart and lung disease. *S.1663/A.4718 - Heart (Harckham/Jones) and S.906/A.4477 – Lung (Harckham/Levenberg)*

4. FIRST RESPONDER PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM ACT:

Support legislation that creates a legal framework specifically for a peer support program tailored for first responders, aiming to bolster mental health resources and support within this community. *S.5407 (Harckham)*

5. TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR UNREARRIED FIREFIGHTERS' SPOUSES:

Relates to the real property tax exemption for unremarried spouses of volunteer firefighters or volunteer ambulance workers killed in the line of duty. *S.688/A.5619 (Martinez/Stern)*

6. FUNDING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

Provides for state assistance to local governments for the enforcement of fire prevention and building codes "54-G." *S.3212 (Kavanagh)*

7. RETIREMENT SERVICE CREDIT:

Establishes a retirement service credit for volunteer fire or emergency service.

8. BUILDING CODES:

Support adoption of the 2024 International Code Council Building Codes including Residential Sprinklers in one- and two-family homes.

9. ENSURE VFBL PARITY WITH WORKERS' COMPENSATION:

Bring the Volunteer Firefighters Benefits Law [VFBL] pay equal to Workers' Compensation Law pay that career firefighters receive when injured in the line of duty. *S.5432 (Skoufis)*

10. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE TAX BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS:

Push to allow volunteer firefighters to receive both real property tax exemptions and income tax credit, while continuing to advocate for an income tax credit increase (has been at \$200 since its inception in 2006). This credit would provide for a step increase tied to qualifying years of service up to \$2,500 for 10 or more consecutive qualifying years of service.