

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD MCCARTHY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

(Neither for Nor Against) L.D. 516

**“An Act to Reduce Cancer Among Firefighters by Providing Grants
for Safety Equipment”**

Presented by: Representative Landry

**BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE
AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

Hearing Date: Monday, March 27th, 2023, at 10:00 AM in Room 436, State House

Good morning, Senator Beebe-Center, Representative Salisbury, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety.

My name is Richard McCarthy, and I am the State Fire Marshal, I am here today representing the Department of Public Safety and the Office of State Fire Marshal to testify neither for nor against this bill.

Cancer is one of the leading causes of death within the Fire service. For years there was not the knowledge that we currently have in reference to hazards that fire fighters encounter each day. In the past it was a badge of honor to have gear that was soiled showing that you had been active at fire scenes, now we know that this gear contains cancer causing

chemicals that we would take off put in our gear bag throw it in your vehicle and stand by for the next call. My gear bag sat in the back seat of my truck for many years. This bill would provide funding for departments to apply to purchase equipment to clean gear to remove all the harmful chemicals. We understand that this is not part of the Governor's current budget, and the difficulties that this creates. But we support whole heartedly the prevention of cancer in fire fighters.

Thank you for your time today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time or during the work session.