



LD 305

An Act to Include Forest Rangers and Forest Fire Prevention Specialists in the Bureau of Forestry's Forest Protection Unit in the Laws Concerning Cancer Suffered by Firefighters

Senator Rafferty, Representative Sylvester, and members of the Labor and Housing Committee; my name is Daniel Tourtelotte and I am the Executive Director of the Maine State Law Enforcement Association. I am here today to testify in support of LD 305, **An Act to Include Forest Rangers and Forest Fire Prevention Specialists in the Bureau of Forest Protection Unit in the Laws Concerning Cancer Suffered by Firefighters.**

During the 127th legislative session, Senator Bill Diamond submitted LD 125, "**An Act Extending Workers Compensation Benefits to Certain Employees of the Office of the State Fire Marshal's Office Who Contract Cancer.**" This bill was ultimately approved by this committee and passed into law by the 127th. In retrospect, MSLEA erred by not having included the fire fighters of the Forest Protection Division in LD 125. Since 2015, there have been a number of studies related to wildland fire fighters that clearly show that the same health risk exist for our Forest Rangers that exist to firefighters currently included in the Presumptive Cancer Law T39-A §328.B Cancer suffered by a firefighter.

The need for this protection has been applied to all other Maine fire fighters making personnel of the Forest Protection Division the last fire fighters to be added to the law. I would like to thank the committee again for their consideration of this important bill, which gives recognition to the serious and dangerous work conducted daily by our Maine Forest Rangers.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions at this time.

Regards,

Dan Tourtelotte