



**Mark E. Bryant**  
166 Albion Road  
Windham, ME 04062  
Phone: (207) 892-6591  
[Mark.Bryant@legislature.maine.gov](mailto:Mark.Bryant@legislature.maine.gov)

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
2 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0002  
(207) 287-1400  
TTY: MAINE RELAY 711

April 30, 2021

***Representative Mark Bryant introducing***  
**LD 1430, An Act Regarding the Waiting Period for Compensation for Incapacity To Work**  
**under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992**  
***Before the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing***

Good afternoon, Senator Hickman, Representative Sylvester and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Labor and Housing. I am Representative Mark Bryant of District 24, which includes part of Windham. I am here today to present **LD 1430, An Act Regarding the Waiting Period for Compensation for Incapacity To Work under the Maine Workers' Compensation Act of 1992.**

Firefighters often work in highly physical, demanding environments where their safety cannot be guaranteed. There is not the only profession where this is the case. Those who work in corrections or who work with especially violent populations suffering from mental illness face similar challenges in their lines of work. However, these professions are treated differently in one critical way.

Under current law, firefighters are exempt from having to wait seven days after a work-related injury has occurred before they can file for workers' compensations. This makes sense because they face unique risks of harm on a regular basis. Those employed at correctional facilities, municipal detention facilities and state mental health institutes face similar threats but must wait seven days before they can file a claim. The problem here is that they are allowed to go back to work before that seven day period is up. If they are physically unable to do so, they are required to use their very limited personal leave time.

LD 1430 would address this problem by including corrections employees and employees of state mental health institutions under the section of the law that exempts firefighters from the seven-day waiting period.

Being injured due to an assault or an infectious disease exposure is a serious threat in these work environments; more so now with the COVID-19 pandemic. The risk of injury or illness is higher, and the costs associated with losing paid work while recovering is even more problematic now.

We must support those who put their wellbeing on the line everyday to protect our communities and provide critical care to those most in need. Unlike firefighters, these jobs are often thankless. But with this legislation, we can do the right thing and ensure they are appropriately covered when they become injured on the job.

I thank you for your time, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.