



Duckworth, Durbin Join Bipartisan Effort to Secure Full Funding for the Firefighter Cancer Registry

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— U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) joined U.S. Senators Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Deb Fischer (R-NE) and 31 of their colleagues in requesting \$2.5 million to fully fund the Firefighter Cancer Registry. The registry, which was passed and signed into law last summer, is managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and collects and monitors the prevalence, incidence and types of cancers among firefighters.

“Full funding for the Firefighter Cancer Registry is critical in order to create a national registry that represents the different types of firefighters and fires across our Country, including volunteer, paid-on-call, and career firefighters,” the Senators wrote in a letter to Sens. Blunt and Murray, Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. **“Full funding is also necessary to create the IT system that will support the registry, allow firefighters to share their data, allow researchers to access the data and, most importantly, to keep all of this personal data secure.”**

A 2015 study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) found that firefighters are at a higher risk of cancer diagnoses and cancer-related deaths for certain types of cancer when compared to the general U.S. population due to occupational exposure, especially digestive, oral, respiratory and urinary cancers and malignant mesothelioma. To bolster the efforts led by researchers at NIOSH, the firefighter cancer registry will improve collection capabilities and activities related to the nationwide monitoring of cancer incidence among all firefighters – both career and volunteer.

The Senators’ request is supported by several major fire organizations, including the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), the Congressional Fire Services Institute, the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, New Jersey Firefighters' Mutual Benevolent Association (FMBA) and the International Fire Services Training Association.

Duckworth and Durbin have been strong advocates for first responders and have worked to make sure they have the resources and protections they need to continue serving their communities. In February, they introduced the bipartisan [First Responders Survivors Support Act](#) to support the families of fallen first responders by increasing the death benefits available to surviving family members. Earlier this month, Duckworth also helped introduce the [Providing Officers with Electronic Resources \(POWER\) Act](#), bipartisan legislation that would protect officers by helping provide state and local law enforcement with high-tech devices to detect and identify dangerous drugs like fentanyl.

In addition to Senators Duckworth, Durbin, Menendez and Fischer, the letter was also signed by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Tom Carper (D-DE), Bob Casey (D-PA), Susan Collins (R-ME), Chris Coons (D-DE), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Gary Peters (D-MI), Jack Reed (D-RI), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Tina Smith (D-MN), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Jon Tester (D-MT), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Rob Wyden (D-OR).

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).