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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1377 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY SCOTT, HILL-EVANS, T. DAVIS, McNEILL, MADDEN,  
SANCHEZ, DELLOSO AND KINSEY, JUNE 12, 2023

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, JUNE 12, 2023

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania  
2 Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions, providing  
3 for Firefighter Cancer Registry.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 35 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
7 Statutes is amended by adding a section to read:

8 § 7715. Firefighter Cancer Registry.

9 (a) Establishment of registry.--The department shall develop  
10 and maintain a Firefighter Cancer Registry, which shall be a  
11 voluntary registry of firefighters to collect relevant history  
12 and occupational information from firefighters that can be  
13 linked to available cancer registry data collected by existing  
14 Commonwealth cancer registries.

15 (b) Registry requirements.--The department shall seek to  
16 include the following information for each firefighter included  
17 in the registry:

18 (1) the age and demographic information of the

1 firefighter;

2 (2) the status of the firefighter as either a paid or  
3 volunteer firefighter;

4 (3) the number of years working as a firefighter;

5 (4) the number of fire incidents attended to by the  
6 firefighter, including the number of incidents involving a  
7 residential house fire, the number of incidents involving a  
8 commercial fire and the number of incidents involving any  
9 other type of fire;

10 (5) whether the firefighter's history includes smoking  
11 or drug use;

12 (6) relevant physical examination and medical history  
13 information; and

14 (7) any additional information that is deemed necessary  
15 by the department.

16 (c) Consulting experts.--For the purpose of developing and  
17 maintaining the registry, the department shall consult experts  
18 with experience in developing and maintaining cancer registries,  
19 studying cancer incidence, diagnosing and treating cancer and  
20 firefighting.

21 (d) Reviewing data and providing public availability.--The  
22 department shall review data reported to the registry to  
23 identify trends in cancer incidence among firefighters  
24 throughout this Commonwealth, including identifying any regional  
25 disparities in cancer incidence and developing strategies to  
26 mitigate risk factors for firefighters developing cancer. The  
27 following apply:

28 (1) The department shall make registry data available to  
29 the public and shall furnish epidemiological registry data,  
30 without fee, to any entity requesting the data for research

1 purposes. The department may authorize the use of registry  
2 information in journal articles and other print and Internet-  
3 based publications. Data made available under this subsection  
4 shall include, but shall not be limited to, raw, de-  
5 identified data, cancer incidence statistics and trends and  
6 other findings identified based on the department's review of  
7 registry data.

8 (2) The department shall periodically review the  
9 registry to identify and implement improvements to registry  
10 infrastructure and Statewide monitoring of cancer incidence  
11 data and to develop a strategy for increasing awareness of  
12 the registry and maximizing the voluntary reporting of  
13 information to the registry.

14 (3) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to  
15 authorize the disclosure of any confidential or personal  
16 identifying information.

17 (e) Reporting.--Beginning one year after the effective date  
18 of this subsection, and annually thereafter, the department  
19 shall submit a report to the Governor and to the General  
20 Assembly concerning its findings regarding trends in cancer  
21 incidence among firefighters in this Commonwealth, including any  
22 recommendations for reducing the cancer rate and risk factors  
23 for developing cancer among firefighters and recommendations for  
24 legislative, administrative or other action as may be  
25 appropriate to reduce cancer incidence among firefighters or to  
26 improve the functioning of, and participation in, the registry.

27 (f) Confidentiality of information.--Names and individual  
28 identification data collected under this section shall not be  
29 disclosed unless required by law, and nothing in this section  
30 shall be construed to require disclosure of any private or

1 confidential health information in violation of Federal or State  
2 privacy laws. Information reported to the registry shall not be  
3 admissible in any civil or criminal proceeding and shall not  
4 constitute the basis for any professional or administrative  
5 disciplinary action against an individual reporting the  
6 individual's own information to the registry.

7 (g) Definitions.--The following words and phrases when used  
8 in this section shall have the meanings given to them in this  
9 subsection unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

10 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

11 "Registry." The Firefighter Cancer Registry established  
12 under this section.

13 Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.