



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## Senate and Assembly approve legislation giving volunteer firefighters health care coverage for job-related cancer diagnoses

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 20, 2017

| ISSUE: **VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**



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**Albany, N.Y., June 20**—The New York State Legislature has approved legislation co-sponsored by Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) to extend critical health care benefits to volunteer firefighters by ensuring expanded levels of protection for firefighters stricken with cancer attributable to their service as volunteers.

“Our volunteer firefighters make great sacrifices to protect the health, safety and well-being of lives and property throughout our communities. They deserve and they’ve earned the health care coverage this legislation would provide,” said O’Mara. “It’s the least we can do for our volunteer firefighters and their families.”

The legislation (**S.1411/A711**) would expand the Volunteer Firefighters’ Benefit Law to provide presumptive cancer coverage to New York’s more than 100,000 volunteer firefighters. The number of firefighters diagnosed with cancer has steadily increased over the past decade. Recent medical studies have concluded that firefighters are at a significantly higher risk for many types of cancers than the general population because they are exposed to higher levels of carcinogens and other toxins in burning buildings and the other hazardous environments they routinely encounter.

The measure now goes to Governor Andrew Cuomo for final action.