



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo, Brindisi hail signing of bill providing better cancer coverage for volunteer firefighters

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO October 24, 2017

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Utica – State Senator Joseph Griffo of Rome and Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi of Utica today issued the following statement, reacting to Governor Cuomo’s signature of the New York State Volunteer Firefighter Gap Coverage Cancer Disabilities Benefits Act. The bill makes qualified volunteer firefighters with five years’ service eligible for a lump sum payment of \$25,000, and possible disability and death benefits, if they contract cancer related to their service as a firefighter:

“This new law will be an enormous step forward in providing the health care coverage our dedicated volunteer firefighters deserve for protecting our community. Firefighting brings with it some risks, and one is an increased likelihood of cancer, due to their exposure to toxic substances in the line of duty. No one who volunteers to protect their community should have to worry about how they will pay for health care if they are diagnosed with a condition related to their occupation.

Many people helped this bill become law over the last several years, including Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther of Forestburgh; the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York; the New York State Association of Fire Chiefs; and many volunteer firefighters and fire departments across New York. But I want to reserve special praise for former

Whitesboro Fire Chief Brian McQueen, who survived cancer, and founded The Believe 271 Foundation to provide emotional and financial support to firefighters in Oneida and Herkimer Counties facing serious illnesses.

“Successful legislation often comes about because a dedicated individual acts as quarterback for the issue. Brian deeply believed in this cause, and his steadfast determination to see this bill become law was truly inspiration, and extremely important to its success. The signing of the legislation is the touchdown Brian and his family and friends have been fighting for.” – **State Senator Joseph Griffo and Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi**