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By:  Patterson H.B. No. 541

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a presumption in regard to the eligibility of public safety employees who have contracted coronavirus disease (COVID-19) for certain benefits.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Subchapter B, Chapter 607, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 607.0541 to read as follows:

Sec. 607.0541.  CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19). A public safety employee who suffers from coronavirus disease (COVID-19) resulting in disability or death is presumed to have contracted the disease during the course and scope of employment as a public safety employee.

SECTION 2.  (a) Except as otherwise provided by this section, Section 607.0541, Government Code, as added by this Act, applies only to a claim for benefits or compensation filed on or after the effective date of this Act. A claim filed before that date is governed by the law as it existed on the date the claim was filed, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

(b)  A person who on or after February 1, 2020, but before the effective date of this Act, filed a claim for benefits or compensation related to coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and whose claim was subsequently denied may file another claim on or after the effective date of this Act, and the changes in law made by this Act apply to that claim.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2021.