

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2957  
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County Affairs  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Currently, there are no set guidelines for firefighters to receive cancer screenings during their service. According to the International Association of Fire Fighters, almost two out of every three firefighters who died on the job died of cancer as smoke from today's fires produces an increasingly toxic brew of chemicals. Wade Cannon, a local firefighter in Flower Mound, Texas, was diagnosed in 2020 with stage four occupational colon cancer at the age of 31. Although he later passed away from cancer, Wade encouraged other firefighters to get tested, two of whom were diagnosed with stage one colon cancer. Early detection increases the survivability of many cancer diagnoses.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified the occupation of firefighting to the highest hazard category, "carcinogenic to humans," and a study by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health showed that firefighters had a nine percent greater chance of being diagnosed with cancer and a 14 percent greater chance of dying from cancer than the general U.S. population. C.S.H.B. 2957 seeks to help address this issue by providing for periodic occupational cancer screenings for firefighters.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 2957 amends the Local Government Code to require a political subdivision that employs firefighters to offer an occupational cancer screening to each firefighter at no cost to the firefighter in the fifth year of the firefighter's employment and once every three years following the initial screening. The screening must be confidential and test for each type of cancer, including colorectal cancer, lung cancer, brain cancer, and prostate cancer, if applicable. The bill defines "firefighter" as an individual defined as fire protection personnel under statutory provisions governing the Texas Commission on Fire Protection that relate to the regulation of and assistance to firefighters and fire departments.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2023.

## **COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 2957 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Whereas the introduced provided for the initial occupational cancer screening in the seventh year of a firefighter's employment, the substitute provides for that screening instead in the fifth year. The substitute specifically lists colorectal cancer as a type of cancer for which the screening must test, whereas the introduced did not specifically list that type of cancer as such.