

HCS HB 580 -- LINE OF DUTY COMPENSATION ACT

SPONSOR: Bruns

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Public Safety by a vote of 12 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Line of Duty Compensation Act which allows a claim to be filed with the Division of Workers' Compensation within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations on behalf of a law enforcement officer, emergency medical technician, or firefighter who was killed in the line of duty. The claim must be filed no later than one year from the date of the death by the spouse, dependent, or other specified person. The amount of compensation for the claim will be \$15,000, subject to appropriations, for deaths occurring on or after August 28, 2009.

The provisions of the substitute will expire six years from the effective date.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on General Revenue Fund in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012. Estimated Cost on Other State Funds of \$187,500 in FY 2010, Unknown greater than \$225,000 in FY 2011, and Unknown greater than \$225,000 in FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that benefit levels for law enforcement officers and emergency medical technicians are so low that qualified individuals are deterred from entering these professions. The bill will increase these benefits to at least cover the funeral expenses for these public servants when they are killed in the line of duty.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Bruns and Fischer (107); Sherwood Smith, Missouri State Council of Firefighters; Deborah Tatoian; Pattonville Fire Protection District; Missouri State Fraternal Order of Police; Metropolitan Ambulance Services Trust; Ambulance District Association of Missouri; Missouri Fire Service Alliance; Missouri Sheriffs Association; Missouri Ambulance Association; Frank Foster, EMS Legal Services; and Water Patrol Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.