

Trump signs Honor Act, recognizing fire fighter cancer as line-of-duty death

The IAFF-backed legislation expands federal death and education benefits for survivors.

In a landmark moment for America's fire fighters, the IAFF-endorsed Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act has been signed into law, officially securing federal recognition of occupational cancer as a line-of-duty death.

The Honor Act passed both chambers of Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support – receiving 312 votes in the House and 77 in the Senate. It was signed into law by President Donald Trump on Thursday, Dec. 19, as part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

“We know the devastation occupational cancer has brought to our profession. When a fire fighter dies from job-related cancer, that is a line-of-duty death – and it is long past time the federal government recognized that truth,” said General President Edward Kelly. “The signing of the Honor Act marks a significant turning point. This legislation ensures our fallen are honored, and their families are not left behind.”

The Honor Act, led by Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.) and Reps. Carlos Gimenez (R-Fla.) and Mary Gay Scanlon (D-Pa.), updates the federal Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) program to recognize occupational cancer as a line-of-duty death. The bill extends death and educational benefits to survivors and presumes certain cancers are job-related, removing the requirement to pinpoint a specific exposure.

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GENERAL PRESIDENT EDWARD KELLY

“This was a truly bipartisan effort, and I want to thank those lawmakers on Capitol Hill – both Republican and Democrat – who stood with us on this critical legislation,” Kelly said. “I also want to thank President Trump, whose support was crucial in passing what is easily one of the most impactful pieces of legislation in our union's history.”

The Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act reforms existing federal law to include 20 types of cancers – including brain, lung, prostate, breast, esophageal, and other cancers prominent in the fire service – to the PSOB Program and presumes them as occupational for fire fighters.

For years, the IAFF has led the national fight to recognize occupational cancer as a line-of-duty death. The union prioritized the Honoring Our Fallen Heroes Act at the 2025 Alfred K. Whitehead Legislative Conference and held [multiple lobbying days with IAFF members and survivors](#) on Capitol Hill.

“We always say the IAFF’s mission starts in front of a church, and that means taking care of our members and the families of our fallen,” Kelly said. “That’s exactly what this PSOB expansion does. It puts more than \$461,000 in federal death benefits in the hands of surviving family members.”

To learn more about the PSOB Program and how the Honor Act will impact members, visit iaff.org/psob/faq.