

UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

AFFILIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

30 Sherman Street, West Hartford, CT 06110

Office: (860) 953-3200 Office Fax: (860) 953-3334

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS



Rick Hart

Peter S. Carozza, Jr., *President*

Director

May 4, 2021

Senator John Fonfara, Chairman, Finance Committee
Representative Sean Scanlon, Chairman, Finance
Committee
Senator Henri Martin, Ranking Member, Finance
Committee
Representative Holly Cheeseman Ranking Member,
Finance Committee

President Pro Tempore Martin Looney
Speaker of the House Matt Ritter
Senate Republican Leader Kevin Kelly
House Minority Leader Vincent Candelora

Dear Senators and Representatives,

The Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association represents 4,000 career Firefighters across Connecticut. As a result of the UPFFA's most recent Executive Board meeting, we are writing this in opposition to Senate Bill 842 "***AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH INSURANCE AND HEALTH CARE IN CONNECTICUT***" and strongly urge you to reject and oppose this measure.

Currently, the UPFFA offers a medical benefit plan to our members through the Northwest Firefighters Trust (NWFFT), administered by and for the Firefighters around the county. The NWFFT was launched in 2013, bringing fire fighters and their families comprehensive, affordable and sustainable health plans. NWFFT creates a "like risk" pool of Firefighters throughout the United States that provides access to both active and retiree health insurance.

The Northwest Firefighters Trust health benefit funds provide a coordinated approach to group purchasing and contracting with medical, pharmacy and other health networks. As advocates for our union members and their families, we cannot standby and allow this negative preemptive policy to impact our dedicated efforts over the years. More importantly, as non-profit healthcare benefit funds, we bring a unique perspective to this debate on Senate Bill 842.

The UPFFA respectfully and strongly opposes SB 842 and its' "one size fits all" State run plan and because of the long-term negative impact it will have on our members and the Connecticut marketplace. We have all worked extremely hard over the years to provide our members and their

Walter M. O'Connor, *President Emeritus*
Santo J. Alleano, Jr., *Vice President Emeritus*

Raymond D. Shea, *President Emeritus*
Patrick J. Shevlin, *Treasurer Emeritus*

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families along with Firefighter retirees the finest healthcare benefits and services. We are very proud that we built and maintained some of the best Union Sponsored health fund in the United States, that provide members with medical, prescription, dental, vision and other important family benefit programs that our members lives are improved from and are greatly appreciated by our members.

If the legislature chooses to move forward with the bill, at a minimum the UPPFA respectfully requests that substitute language be adopted that will exempt any member or Local Union in good standing with their respective State Association or National Union that has a Union Sponsored Benefit Trust plan from the provisions of SB 842, including, but not limited to, any penalty or tax imposed by the legislation or as a result of not participating in the State Partnership Plan.

Should you have any questions, please contact Rick Hart, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs at 203-232-4792

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Peter Carozza

President

Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association of Connecticut