

## H.197 amendments

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**Rep. Poirier of Barre City**, for the **Committee on Commerce and Economic Development**, recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committee on Health Care and when further amended as follows:

In Sec. 1, 21 V.S.A. § 601, by striking out Sec. 1 in its entirety and inserting a new Sec. 1 to read as follows:

Sec. 1. 21 V.S.A. § 601 is amended to read:

### § 601. DEFINITIONS

Unless the context otherwise requires, words and phrases used in this chapter shall be construed as follows:

\* \* \*

(11) "Personal injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment" includes an injury caused by the willful act of a third person directed against an employee because of that employment.

\* \* \*

(I)(i) In the case of police officers, rescue or ambulance workers, or firefighters, post-traumatic stress disorder that is diagnosed by a mental health professional shall be presumed to have been incurred during service in the line of duty and shall be compensable, unless it is shown by a preponderance of the evidence that the post-traumatic stress disorder was caused by nonserviceconnected risk factors or nonservice-connected exposure.

(ii) A police officer, rescue or ambulance worker, or firefighter who is diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder within three years of the last active date of employment as a police officer, rescue or ambulance worker, or firefighter shall be eligible for benefits under this subdivision (11).

(iii) As used in this subdivision (11)(I):

(I) "Firefighter" means a firefighter as defined in 20 V.S.A.

§ 3151(3) and (4).

(II) "Mental health professional" means a person with professional training, experience, and demonstrated competence in the treatment and diagnosis of mental conditions, who is certified or licensed by this State to provide mental health care services and for whom diagnoses of mental conditions are within his or her scope of practice, including a physician, nurse with recognized psychiatric specialties, psychologist, clinical social worker, mental health counselor, or alcohol or drug abuse counselor.

(III) "Police officer" means a law enforcement officer who has been certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council pursuant to 20

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V.S.A. chapter 151.

(IV) "Rescue or ambulance worker" means ambulance service, emergency medical personnel, first responder service, and volunteer personnel as defined in 24 V.S.A. § 2651.

(J)(i) A mental condition resulting from a work-related event or

work-related stress shall be considered a personal injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment and be compensable if it is demonstrated by the preponderance of the evidence that:

(I) the work-related event or work-related stress was extraordinary and unusual in comparison to pressures and tensions experienced by the average employee across all occupations; and

(II) the work-related event or work-related stress, and not some other event or source of stress, was the predominant cause of the mental condition.

(ii) A mental condition shall not be considered a personal injury by accident arising out of and in the course of employment if it results from any disciplinary action, work evaluation, job transfer, layoff, demotion, termination, or similar action taken in good faith by the employer.

\* \* \*

**( Committee Vote: 9-1-1)**

**Rep. Keenan of St. Albans City, for the Committee on Appropriations,** recommends the bill ought to pass when amended as recommended by the Committees on Health Care and Commerce and Economic Development.  
**(Committee Vote: 11-0-0)**

**Amendment to be offered by Rep. Marcotte of Coventry to the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Health Care to H. 197**

Rep. Marcotte of Coventry moves that the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Health Care be amended by inserting a Sec. 1a to read:  
Sec. 1a. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER; STUDY OF EXPERIENCE AND COSTS; REPORT

(a) The Commissioner of Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of Administration, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation; the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the National Council on Compensation Insurance, shall examine claims for workers compensation made pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 601(11)(I) and (J) between July 1, 2017 and January 1, 2020,

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including:

(1) the number of claims made;

(2) the cost of the workers compensation benefits provided for those claims; and

(3) any changes in administrative and premium costs associated with those claims.

(b) On or before January 15 of each year from 2018 through 2020, the Commissioner shall report to the House Committees on Appropriations, on Commerce and Economic Development, and on Health Care, and the Senate Committees on Appropriations, on Finance, and on Health and Welfare regarding its findings and any recommendations for legislative changes to reduce the cost of providing workers' compensation coverage pursuant to 21 V.S.A. § 601(11)(I) and (J).

**Amendment to be offered by Rep. Greshin of Warren to the recommendation of amendment of the Committee on Health Care to H. 197**

Rep. Greshin of Warren moves that the recommendation of the Committee on Health Care be amended as follows:

In Sec. 1, 21 V.S.A. § 601, subdivision (11)(I)(iii)(IV), after the first sentence by inserting a second sentence to read ““Rescue or ambulance worker” does not include any ambulance service, emergency medical personnel, first responder service, or volunteer personnel in the employment of a ski patrol.”