

# FIRE MECHANICS CANCER LEGISLATION UPDATE

May 13, 2019

**Come meet us at 514 Shatto Place Los Angeles at 6pm on May 31, 2019**

## WE'RE ONE STEP CLOSER!!!!

The ball is rolling folks! The AFSCME political machine has made significant progress since we've last met in 2018. Local 119 has been joined by AFSCME Council 57, and others in this push for equity between our fire mechanics and our brothers and sisters in the firefighter ranks. With the help of AFSCME California People, Brian Allison, we have crafted AB 1400. Assemblymember Kamlager-Dove toured the LA County Fire Department Fleet repair facility last month and has taken on this fight with us and sponsored AB1400. We have educated multiple Assembly members, with several visits to the Capitol and local offices, and we are extremely happy to report that our bill has made it thru the Assembly Insurance Commission with a 14 to zero vote in support (see link). However, the Work is not done, and we need you help to continue this fight and complete our mission.

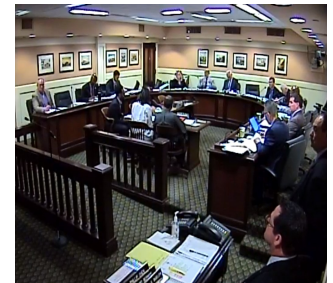


Above  
ASM Kamlager-Dove visiting LACoFD Fleet Facility. Luis Del-Cid (Mechanic and cancer survivor) briefing her on unique exposure risks for fire mechanics

Below  
April 24th, 2019. ASM Kamlager-Dove presenting AB1400 to Assembly Insurance Committee. Luis Del-Cid (Treasurer of AFSCME 119), testifies on behalf of all members, past and present. Harry Wong (president AFSCME 119, Gary Hodge (Executive Member AFSCME 119) and Andy Jung (President AFSCME 36) speak in support



Above  
Fire Mechanic Hodge showing ASM Kamlager-Dove remnants of multiple fires accumulated on rig



**More Research**

**More Research**

- **ASM Kamlager-Dove**  
<https://a54.asmdc.org/>
- **Video of Assembly Insurance Committee**  
<https://www.assembly.ca.gov/media/assembly-insurance-committee-20190424/video>
- **AFSCME Local 119**  
<https://www.afscme36.org/afscme-local-119>
- **American Cancer Society**  
<https://www.cancer.org/>
- **Local 119 Contact info**  
[local119@l119.afscme36.org](mailto:local119@l119.afscme36.org)
- **AB1400 Info**  
[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201920200AB1400](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1400)

**MEET US AT 514 SHATTO PLACE LOS ANGELES ON 31 MAY 2019 FOR UPDATES, DISCUSSIONS, AND A "BATTLE PLAN" FOR OUR NEXT STEPS**

Special Guest speakers  
Dinner will be provided

**Agenda:**

- Review AB1400
- Gather volunteers for Capital and local lobbying
- Develop a Mail Campaign
- Outreach plan

## AB 1400 – Protect Fire Service Personnel

### IN BRIEF (A FACT SHEET ABOUT AB1400)

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AB 1400 WOULD ENSURE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF A CITY, COUNTY, OR SPECIAL DISTRICT WHO ARE EXPOSED IN THE LINE OF DUTY TO ACTIVE FIRES OR CARCINOGENIC MATERIALS FROM FIREFIGHTING OPERATIONS RECEIVE FULL MEDICAL AND DISABILITY COVERAGE IF THEY DEVELOP CANCER THAT HAS BEEN LINKED TO EXPOSURE TO FIRES BASED ON THE CRITERIA ESTABLISHED TO DETERMINE FIREFIGHTERS' ELIGIBILITY FOR PRESUMPTIVE COVERAGE IN THE CALIFORNIA LABOR CODE.

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In local governments and fire districts across the state, civilian workers classified as 'fire mechanics,' 'fire equipment mechanics,' and other maintenance positions play a vital and direct role in ensuring the equipment used by firefighters in their respective jurisdictions are adequately maintained and serviced. The essential roles these workers perform will ensure emergency response networks are ready to respond to crises has often been overlooked as our state's fire service systems deals with an increasing number of deadly and fast-moving blazes.

A 2010 National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) study of U.S. firefighters found that exposure to these carcinogens increase the risk of certain types of cancer as a result of occupational exposure in the line of duty. The firefighters have a higher risk of developing cancer and a 14 percent higher risk of dying from respiratory, gastrointestinal and kidney cancers. As a result, active firefighters who were exposed to known carcinogens defined by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and, as a result, developed cancer are entitled to full medical coverage by their employer or through workers' compensation due to legislative actions taken by lawmakers. This coverage includes full hospital, surgical, medical treatment, disability indemnity, and death benefits.

However, the same protections do not extend to civilian personnel who have the responsibility of repairing and maintaining fire 'rigs,' helicopters and other equipment used by active firefighters in the line of duty. These civilian fire service employees are exposed to the same known carcinogens identified by the IARC through their handling of equipment and exposure in facilities where carcinogenic materials reside.

Civilian fire personnel are often called to the frontlines of active firefighting efforts, especially in times of crisis like those that occurred in the recent wildfires in Northern and Southern California. Fire mechanics in Los Angeles County, for example, were called to the Woolsey and Thomas fire lines for over a week last winter to maintain and fix malfunctioning fire suppression equipment as firefighters battled blazes that threatened thousands of homes and local businesses. Workers in the 'Helicopter Mechanic' classification within the same county are sometimes required to fly above active fires with firefighters during aerial fire suppression efforts to diagnose faulty equipment or assist with suppression efforts. In doing so, they willingly expose themselves to the same carcinogens that affect frontline firefighters to ensure the public's safety, yet they have no assurance that they will not face financial disaster should an unfortunate medical crisis, such as a cancer diagnosis resulting from exposure to hazards on the job, occur.

AB 1400 would ensure current disputable presumption regarding on duty-cancer diagnoses available to firefighters extends to civilian fire support staff with legitimate exposure to carcinogenic materials resulting from fires. This would have the effect of extending full medical and coverage to fire service personnel who develop cancers that develop as a result of exposure to work-related contaminants.

Our state’s civilian fire support staff perform vital and very important work ensuring that firefighters have the tools they need to protect Californians from some of the most deadly wildfires in the state’s history. Unfortunately, diagnoses of cancer are often too common amongst the ranks of these public servants. AB 1400 would ensure that workers facing life threatening illnesses resulting from exposure to known carcinogens during the course of their work do not spell economic disaster for their families and in the case of death resulting from this exposure, provides their families with the resources to cover their final expenses and care for their remaining loved ones.

SPONSORS

- American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFL-CIO)
- AFSCME District Council 36 and AFSCME District Council 57 (Co-Sponsors)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

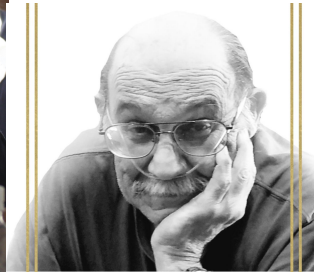
**Howard Quan**  
**Office of Asm. Sydney Kamlager-Dove**  
916-319-2054 [howard.quan@asm.ca.gov](mailto:howard.quan@asm.ca.gov)

**PLEASE JOIN US ON MAY 31 AT  
514 SHATTO PLACE, 6PM  
WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO SEE  
THIS THRU!!!**

IN MEMORIAM

MARK BARNEY

Fire Helicopter Mechanic, US Air Force Veteran, and former President of AFSCME Local 119 passed away from Cancer last month. He will be missed. Thank you for your service  
Mark



JULY 31, 1948 - APRIL 4, 2019

*In loving memory of*

*Mark W. Barney*

JOIN US FOR A MEMORIAL SERVICE  
TO CELEBRATE MARK'S LIFE  
2745 TUMBLEWEED CIRCLE, SIMI VALLEY, CA 93065  
MAY 4, AT 12 PM  
PLEASE CONTACT 805-338-1193



*This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.*

*It would also be useful to include a contact name for readers who want more information about the organization.*

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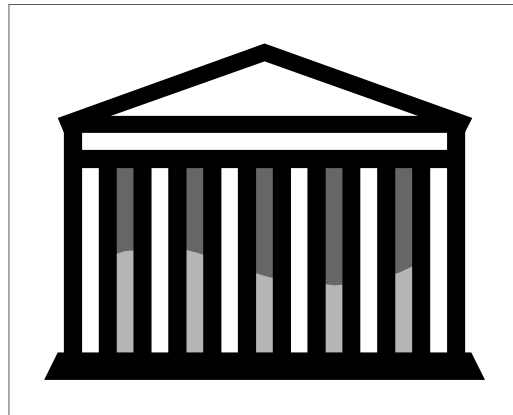
## BACK PAGE STORY HEADLINE

This story can fit 175-225 words.

If your newsletter is folded and mailed, this story will appear on the back. So, it's a good idea to make it easy to read at a glance.

A question and answer session is a good way to quickly capture the attention of readers. You can either compile questions that you've received since the last edition or you can summarize some generic questions that are frequently asked about your organization.

A listing of names and titles of managers in your organization is a good way to give your newsletter a personal touch. If your organization is small, you may want to list the names of all employees. If you have any prices of stan-



Caption describing picture or graphic.

such as a breakfast meeting for vendors every third Tuesday of the month, or a biannual charity auction.

If space is available, this is a good place to insert a clip art image or some other graphic.

standard products or services, you can include a listing of those here. You may want to refer your readers to any other forms of communication that you've created for your organization.

You can also use this space to remind readers to mark their calendars for a regular event,