



STATE SENATOR BEVERLY POWELL

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Powell Files Legislation to Classify COVID-19 as Presumptive Disease for First Responders

Fort Worth, TX – Today, State Sen. Beverly Powell filed Senate Bill 107 which classifies COVID-19 as a presumptive disease for first responders. As COVID-19 began to spread earlier this year, many Texas municipalities declared that police officers, firefighters, EMT and other first responders who contracted COVID-19 would presume to have contracted COVID-19 on the job. However, the state has yet to make COVID-19 presumptive meaning a first responder would have to enter a bureaucratic process to prove they contracted the virus on the job to become eligible for many state benefits for first responders and their families.

In April, State Sen. Powell joined a bipartisan group of lawmakers asking the Governor to use his authority to make COVID-19 presumptive (letter attached).

After filing SB 107, Sen. Powell said, **“Since the start of this pandemic, far too many first responders and their families have felt the consequences of COVID-19. Police officers, firefighters and EMT's are the first on the scene responding to COVID-19 emergency calls and deserve to know that their families will be supported should the virus take their life. We owe so much to the front line workers who have led us through this pandemic – taking the common-sense approach of presuming COVID was contracted on the job and making the families of first responders eligible for state benefits is just one of the ways Texas can make good on our commitment to our brave heroes.”**

The Combined Law Enforcement Associations of Texas (CLEAT) praised Sen. Powell’s efforts: **“CLEAT has been fighting for presumptive for all first responders since the beginning of the pandemic. The bipartisan support from elected legislators like Senator Beverly Powell has been overwhelming. First responders must go to work, are unable to shelter in place, and deserve to be taken care of in the event that they become ill or die from COVID-19. Currently, there are families who have been denied the compensation they deserve or have lost a loved one in the line of duty and are suffering through a bureaucratic nightmare. CLEAT and the over 25,000 law enforcement officers we represent are grateful to Senator Powell for this piece of legislation.”**

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