



May 28, 2020

The Honorable Kirk Schuring  
Chairman  
General Government and Agency Review Committee  
Ohio Senate  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Schuring:

Our organizations, on behalf of our members, write to you today to express our opposition to Amended House Bill 308.

Collectively we have long advocated for a workers' compensation system in Ohio that benefits workers, employers, and the economy of the state. Over the past decade the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation has continued to make strides in medical outcomes and actuarial soundness.

The Ohio workers' compensation system was designed to compensate injured workers' physical injuries/illnesses and any mental conditions that arise as a result of such physical injuries/illnesses. Our organizations have a history of opposing proposals that would permit PTSD compensation where there is no associated physical injury or illness. The adoption of a mental-only diagnosis would create a significant departure to longstanding and clear precedent in Ohio workers' compensation law.

Expanding PTSD coverage in the workers' compensation system will lead to cost increases to Ohio's public and private employers. In addition, given that mental health benefits have parity with physical health benefits under health insurance plans, it is important to have a broader conversation about where PTSD arising apart from a workplace physical injury/illness is most effectively and appropriately financed -- health insurance, an emergency responder fund, or a separate PTSD benefits system as advocated by our collective organizations. This separate system would establish a fund at the Department of Public Safety to provide benefits to first responders for PTSD without an accompanying physical injury. House Bill 556 was recently introduced to accomplish this goal and would ensure first responders can get the assistance they deserve, while at the same time preserving the workers' compensation system from an unintended expansion of coverage. We respectfully ask the Senate to consider this proposal.

Therefore, we would respectfully ask that the Senate Government and Agency Review Committee delay voting on House Bill 308 or in the alternative vote no on House Bill 308 in order to find a solution that all interested parties can support.