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FLOOR DEBATE

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Stuthman, followed by Senator Johnsons and Vrtiska.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Thank you, Mr. President, and members of the board. I do, also, rise in support of this bill. I am personally a volunteer fireman for the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department. I've been a volunteer for 32 years already, and while I'm here at this legislative body, they have given me a leave of absence. So that when I do get back home, I will still be a volunteer fireman. I think one of the things that realistically happens when people want to belong to the volunteer fire department is they have one thing in mind, and that thing is to hopefully help and save a life somewhere at sometime during their being a volunteer fireman. They also are very excited about trying to save property and to keep as much of the community intact as possible. I'm...I really never ever thought, you know, of not being covered under the compensation, you know, from the time you leave home until you get home, but we have never had an instance of our fire department where this would have ever applied to but there sure is a chance when this could happen. And now that I am aware that this could happen, I think the rest of my volunteer firemen are very appreciative of this bill and hopeful that it does get passed. I am one of the, probably, the older members of the volunteer fire department at the present time. We have a lot of young ones that really are dedicated to attending the fires, attending the accidents, and going and helping with the response of the emergency unit. So I totally rise in support of this bill, and I would like to thank Senator Hudkins for offering this bill. Thank you

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuthman. Senator Johnson.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Senator Cudaback and members of the body, I, too, also rise in support of this bill. In visiting with my predecessor before coming down here, he made one statement. And that is that there are no easy laws yet to be passed. He was wrong. This is an easy one, and I really can't understand why it hasn't been done before. I've been around these public-spirited people for all of my adult life, and to not protect them when they are out there risking, literally risking their lives in certain instances, I think is long past due to