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Governor Doyle Signs Legislation to Protect Public Service Workers and Their Families

Also Signs Seven Bills

MADISON – Governor Jim Doyle today signed into law two bills that will protect firefighters, police officers and other public service workers and their families. The first bill, **Senate Bill 520**, requires that municipalities pay health insurance premiums for the families of firefighters who die, or have died, in the line of duty.

"Families of firefighters who have lost their lives shouldn't have to worry about whether or not they're going to be able to pay their health care bills," Governor Doyle said. "This bill ensures that these families are protected when their loved ones make the ultimate sacrifice."

Governor Doyle thanked Senators Hansen and Coggs and Representatives Hraychuck and Turner for their work on the bill.

Governor Doyle also signed into law **Senate Bill 429**, which establishes that if a firefighter, police officer or other public service worker gets sick or dies from cancer, heart disease or a respiratory impairment, the bill assumes that person's job duties caused the illness, as long as that person didn't show any signs of the disease during his or her qualifying medical exam. The bill also ensures that provision is considered when determining health benefits.

"Every day, our fire fighters, police officers and others are walking into situations that could potentially be life threatening," Governor Doyle said. "That includes contracting dangerous illnesses, and this bill goes further in protecting those workers and their families."

Governor Doyle thanked Senators Sullivan and Coggs and Representatives Sinicki and Berceau for their work on the bill.

Governor Doyle also signed into law the following bills:

- **Senate Bill 523** establishes new unfair labor practices in violation of collective bargaining rights.

Governor Doyle thanked Senators Coggs and Hansen and Representatives Pocan and Mason for their work on the bill.

- **Senate Bill 585** prohibits discrimination against employees who choose not to attend religious or political meetings held by their employer.

Governor Doyle thanked Senators Coggs and Hansen and Representatives Van Akkeren and Sinicki for their work on the bill.

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- **Senate Bill 586** makes certain changes to the apprenticeship program at the Department of Workforce Development to conform to new federal regulations and to ease administration of the program.

Governor Doyle thanked Senator Coggs and Representatives Toles, Sheridan and Sinicki for their work on the bill.

- **Senate Bill 672** requires the Department of Workforce Development to establish a system to ensure the proper classification of workers under UI, workers comp and labor standards laws.

Governor Doyle thanked Senators Wirch and Coggs and Representatives Parisi and Sinicki for their work on the bill.

- **Assembly Bill 314** regulates the use of pesticides by railroads, including notifying the public and railroad workers when pesticides are being applied.

Governor Doyle thanked Representatives Molepske and Berceau and Senators Wirch and Lassa for their work on the bill.

- **Assembly Bill 884** makes various changes to the unemployment insurance law.

Governor Doyle thanked Representative Sinicki and Senator Coggs for their work on the bill.

- **Assembly Bill 929** strengthens the worker misclassification provisions contained in the biennial budget, 2009 Act 28, by adding painting and drywall finishing to the list of construction trade employees subject to these provisions.

Governor Doyle thanked Representatives Pocan and Sinicki and Senators Risser and Lassa for their work on the bill.