



August 28, 2023

The Honorable Josh Gottheimer  
203 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Anthony D'Esposito  
1508 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: H.R. 5212, *FIRE Cancer Act***

Dear Representative Gottheimer and Representative D'Esposito:

On behalf of the Oncology Nursing Society (ONS), thank you for introducing H.R. 5212, the *Firefighter Investments to Recognize Exposure to Cancer (FIRE Cancer) Act*. This important legislation would provide federal investments to increase firefighter access to multi-cancer early detection and other preventative tests.

As you know, cancer was the cause of 66% of the career firefighter line-of-duty deaths from 2002 to 2019. As a result of their occupational exposure to high levels of toxic chemicals, firefighters have a 9% higher risk of being diagnosed with cancer, and a 14% higher risk of dying from cancer, than the general population. Among the cancers firefighters are disproportionately affected by are lung, kidney, gastrointestinal cancers and mesothelioma, a very rare cancer. In addition, emerging research is suggesting that this increased risk is also passed forward to children of firefighters. Oncology nurses are the health professionals involved in the administration and monitoring of chemotherapy and managing the associated side effects cancer patients may experience. Every day, oncology nurses see the suffering caused by cancer and understand the physical, emotional, and financial challenges that people with cancer, and their families, face throughout the cancer care continuum.

ONS represents the interests of the 110,000 U.S. oncology nurses dedicated to excellence in patient care, education, research, and administration in oncology nursing. ONS members are a diverse group of professionals who represent a variety of professional roles, practice settings, and subspecialty practice areas. Oncology nurses are leaders in the health care arena, committed to continuous learning and leading the transformation of cancer care by advocating for high-quality care for people with cancer.

ONS and its members stand ready to work with you and your staff to reduce and prevent suffering from cancer. We would be happy to discuss ways in which ONS may be of assistance in this endeavor and would encourage you to contact Erica Fischer-Carlidge, DNP, RN, AOCNS, EBP(CH), Chief Clinical Officer, at [EFischer-Carlidge@ons.org](mailto:EFischer-Carlidge@ons.org). We look forward to engaging in an ongoing dialogue to address issues of importance to our cancer patients and ways in which we can promote public health.

Sincerely,

The Oncology Nursing Society