



## New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association, Inc.

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REV. JOHN TALLMAN  
40 Collins Place  
Albany, NY 12208

May 28, 2024

RE: AN ACT in relation to protecting the health insurance benefits of retirees of public employers and contributions of retirees of public employers

S.8388-B (Harckham)

A.7866-B (Zebrowski)

### MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

The New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association (NYSPFFA), I.A.F.F. AFL-CIO, a not-for-profit association representing 18,000 fire fighters in 110 Locals in various cities, villages, and towns across New York State, strongly supports the enactment of this legislation, which will prohibit public employers in New York State from diminishing the health insurance benefits provided to retirees and their dependents.

Specifically, this bill, otherwise known as the "Health Equity for Retirees Act" or HERA), ensures that the health insurance coverage and contributions provided by public employers for their retirees remain consistent with what has been provided as of December 31, 2021.

NYSPFFA has continuously fought to protect the health benefits of our retired firefighters. Health insurance coverage is a major issue for retirees, who often face tremendous health care costs at a time of severely diminished income and the continuation of health insurance after retirement is critical for our members.

Our firefighters are acknowledged as true heroes who place themselves in danger to protect their fellow citizens and part of society's obligation to our firefighters should be to assure them of adequate health insurance, both during their working years and into retirement.

Therefore, NYSPFFA strongly supports the enactment of this legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Samuel A. Fresina, President  
New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association