

BROOME COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS' ASSOCIATION
BROOME COUNTY, NEW YORK

**GOVERNOR SIGNS BILL TO EXTEND VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER
“HEART BILL” ANOTHER FIVE YEARS**

Governor Paterson has signed legislation to approve another five-year extension of the “Heart Bill” which acknowledges that heart attacks can be linked to the rigors of firefighting. A summary of the bill is below.

The fire service has long sought a permanent “Heart Bill”, but the legislature has instead opted to pass temporary bills at five year intervals. On a couple of occasions these bills have come close to expiring, with extensions being pushed through at the last minute. While we still hope for a permanent bill, at least the extension is now in place for another five years.

Heart Bill (S2769-A Valesky D Auburn) (A 5895-A Magee D Oneida) This legislation extends for another 5 years a presumption that Volunteer Firefighter heart related disabilities can be attributed to volunteer firefighting activity. Although this presumption is subject to scrutiny through the worker compensation claims process, it recognizes the unusual risks taken by volunteer firefighters and establishes a system of benefits for volunteers that die or become injured in the line of duty.