September 18, 2020

To: Members, California Fire Chiefs Association
    Members, Fire Districts Association of California

From: Russell Noack and Julee Malinowski Ball
       Public Policy Advocates, LLC

Re: FIRE Legislative Report – Week Ending 09/18/2020

During a week where the Governor met with President Trump in Sacramento to discuss stronger cooperation between the State and Federal Government on emergency wildfire response and relief activities, Governor Newsom found time to sign into law two worker protection bills to extend access to workers’ compensation benefits for COVID-19 injuries and to provide timely warnings of COVID-19 cases occurring at the workplace.

**Senate Bill 1159 (Hill)** extends the **Governor’s Executive Order N-62-20** creating a rebuttable presumption for firefighters, peace officers and health care workers until July 1, 2024. Additionally, the bill establishes a rebuttable presumption for workplace outbreaks based on the number of cases and the size of the company.

**Assembly Bill 685 (Reyes)** will require employers to report outbreak of COVID-19 cases at a workplace to other workers who may have been exposed and to local public health officials. The bill strengthens CAL/OSHA enforcement powers by providing the authority to close a workplace due to COVID-19 hazard and thereby reduce penalties for unsafe work citations.

Two additional bills signed into law this week include:

**Assembly Bill 1945 (Salas)** defines first responders to include public safety dispatchers, telecommunicators and emergency response communication employees.

**Senate Bill 38 (Hill)** will extend until January 1, 2026, the exemption from the sales and use tax law allowing the gross amount of proceeds from local fundraisers to remain with all volunteer fire departments.

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