

March 14, 2012

House Insurance Committee  
Representative Clark Shultz, Chairman  
Testimony for Senate Bill - 250

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.  
Thank You for allowing me the opportunity to speak today in support of SB-250.

This legislation was brought to my attention by Firefighters who are concerned about their colleagues who sometimes lose their lives in the line of duty while saving the lives of our friends, family members, and neighbors. This unfortunate situation may leave behind a spouse and /or children without health coverage. Mr. Rocky Bumgarner, who is the president of the International Association of Firefighters Local 135 in Wichita, is unable to be here today to share the story of his colleague, a fallen Firefighter whose family is dealing with this issue. I believe SB-250 will help Firefighters who put their lives on the line for us.

I feel, we can and must repay them by providing continued health coverage for their families. While this bill doesn't begin to repay the debt our state owes to Captain Eck, or to any of our brave firemen and firewomen, it is my hope that we can at least provide some stability to their families during a time of need.

Thank You for your time and consideration and I urge your support for SB-250.

Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau



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## Senate Advances Health Insurance Bill For Fallen Firefighters' Families

Wichita Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau introduced the bill in memory of Captain Urban Eck. The Wichita firefighter died as a result of battling an apartment fire in January of 2010.



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**Thursday, March 8, 2012**

The Kansas Senate has passed a bill that would continue health insurance coverage for families of fallen firefighters.

Senate Bill 250 requires health premiums for a surviving spouse to continue to be paid for up to 18 months, or until the spouse remarries or reaches age 65. Dependent children will be covered for 18 months, or until the child reaches age 18. A child who reaches age 18, but is enrolled full-time in an accredited high school or postsecondary educational institution, will continue to receive coverage for up to 18 months or until the child reaches age 24.

Under current law, the surviving spouse of a firefighter killed in duty or from the effects of injuries received while on duty is eligible for a death benefit through the Firefighters Relief Fund.

Wichita Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau introduced the bill in memory of Captain Urban Eck. The Wichita firefighter died as a result of battling an apartment fire in January of 2010.

“While this bill doesn’t begin to repay the debt our state owes to Captain Eck, or to any of our brave firefighters, it’s my hope that we can at least provide some stability to their families during a time of need,” Faust-Goudeau said.

Twenty-two Kansas firefighters have died in the line of duty since 2000, most recently in January 2011.

Senators Allen Schmidt of Hays, and Dick Kelsey of Goddard co-sponsored the bill. The measure now moves to the House for consideration.

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