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H.695

Introduced by Representatives Higley of Lowell, Anthony of Barre City,  
Arsenault of Williston, Brumsted of Shelburne, Burditt of West  
Rutland, Campbell of St. Johnsbury, Carpenter of Hyde Park,  
Christie of Hartford, Clifford of Rutland City, Dolan of Essex  
Junction, Farlice-Rubio of Barnet, Galfetti of Barre Town,  
Gregoire of Fairfield, Hango of Berkshire, Harrison of  
Chittenden, Hooper of Burlington, Howard of Rutland City,  
Krasnow of South Burlington, Labor of Morgan, LaBounty of  
Lyndon, Maguire of Rutland City, Masland of Thetford,  
Morgan of Milton, Morrissey of Bennington, Mrowicki of  
Putney, Noyes of Wolcott, Oliver of Sheldon, Page of Newport  
City, Peterson of Clarendon, Roberts of Halifax, Sammis of  
Castleton, Shaw of Pittsford, Sims of Craftsbury, Smith of  
Derby, Stone of Burlington, Templeman of Brownington, and  
Wilson of Lyndon

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Public safety; law enforcement officers; survivors' benefits

1 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to provide the  
2 same monetary benefit currently available to survivors of firefighters and  
3 emergency personnel to survivors of law enforcement officers.

4 An act relating to survivor benefits for law enforcement officers

5 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

6 Sec. 1. SHORT TITLE

7 This act may be cited as Jessica’s Law.

8 Sec. 2. 20 V.S.A. chapter 181 is amended to read:

9 CHAPTER 181. BENEFITS FOR THE SURVIVORS OF EMERGENCY

10 PERSONNEL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

11 § 3171. DEFINITIONS

12 As used in this chapter:

13 (1) “Board” means the Emergency Personnel and Law Enforcement  
14 Officers Survivors Benefit Review Board.

15 \* \* \*

16 (4) “Line of duty” means:

17 (A) ~~answering or returning from~~ With respect to emergency  
18 personnel:



1 Treasurer or designee, the Attorney General or designee, the Chief Fire Service  
2 Training Officer of the Vermont Fire Service Training Council or designee,  
3 ~~and the Executive Director of the Vermont Criminal Justice Council or~~  
4 designee, one member of the public to represent the interests of emergency  
5 personnel appointed by the Governor for a term of two years, and one member  
6 of the public to represent the interests of law enforcement officers appointed  
7 by the Governor for a term of two years.

8 (2) ~~Survivors of emergency personnel, employed by or who volunteer~~  
9 ~~for the State of Vermont, a county or municipality of the State, or a nonprofit~~  
10 ~~entity that provides services in the State, the following individuals~~ who die in  
11 the line of duty or of an occupation-related illness may request the Board  
12 award a monetary benefit under section 3173 of this title:

13 (A) emergency personnel, employed by or who volunteer for the  
14 State of Vermont, a county or municipality of the State, or a nonprofit entity  
15 that provides services in the State; and

16 (B) law enforcement officers.

17 (3) The Board shall be responsible for determining whether to award  
18 monetary benefits under section 3173 of this title. A decision to award  
19 monetary benefits shall be made by unanimous vote of the Board and shall be  
20 made within 60 days after the receipt of all information necessary to enable the  
21 Board to determine eligibility.



1 § 3173. MONETARY BENEFIT

2 (a) The survivors of emergency personnel or a law enforcement officer who  
3 dies while in the line of duty or from an occupation-related illness may apply  
4 for a payment of \$50,000.00 from the State.

5 \* \* \*

6 § 3175. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

7 OFFICERS SURVIVORS BENEFIT SPECIAL FUND

8 (a) The Emergency Personnel and Law Enforcement Officers Survivors  
9 Benefit Special Fund is established in the Office of the State Treasurer for the  
10 purpose of the payment of claims distributed pursuant to this chapter. The  
11 Fund shall comprise appropriations made by the General Assembly and  
12 contributions or donations from any other source. All balances in the Fund at  
13 the end of the fiscal year shall be carried forward. Interest earned shall remain  
14 in the Fund.

15 \* \* \*

16 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

17 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.