

COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PENSION IMPACT NOTE

99TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

BILL NO: **SB 817**

February 11, 2015

SPONSOR(S): T. Cullerton

SYSTEM(S): Downstate Firefighters

FISCAL IMPACT: SB 817 may increase the overall aggregate accrued liabilities of Downstate Firefighters' Pension Funds if SB 817 leads to an increase in duty disability awards. However, it is unclear by what amount, as the number of firefighters who will become eligible is not known.

SUBJECT MATTER: SB 817 amends the Downstate Firefighters Article of the Illinois Pension Code to expand the definition of duty disability benefits.

COMMENT: SB 817 adds language to the Downstate Firefighters' Article of the Illinois Pension Code. This bill redefines "on duty" to include "on duty and engaged in an act of duty." Under SB 817 a firefighter will now also be considered "on duty and engaged in an act of duty" when engaging in any activity approved by the chief of the fire department, including when he or she participates in training activities to enhance the skills and abilities of the firefighter whether within or away from the municipality that they serve as a firefighter. Also, if an assignment is related to fire protection service of the municipality, it will be considered an "act of duty" even if performed without compensation. If a firefighter is injured pursuant to the new language in this bill, he or she will be eligible to receive duty disability benefits.

MD:dkb

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