

**SUBJECT:** Requiring fire departments to offer annual medical examinations

**COMMITTEE:** Urban Affairs — committee substitute recommended

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Lozano, Gates, Bernal, Cortez, Cunningham, J. González, Hayes, Romero, Tepper

0 nays

**WITNESSES:** For — John Riddle, Texas State Association of Fire Fighters (*Registered, but did not testify*; Michael Glynn, Fort Worth Firefighters Association-IAFF Local 440; Aidan Alvarado, Laredo Firefighters Association; Michael Silva, Mission Fire Fighters Association; Jordan Preddy)

Against — None

On — Bill Kelly, Mayor’s Office, City of Houston (*Registered, but did not testify*; Clifford Sparks, City of Dallas)

**BACKGROUND:** Due to the nature of their work, fire fighters suffer high rates of illness, including cardiovascular disease and cancer. Some have suggested that annual health examinations could help detect these illnesses earlier and prevent life-threatening conditions from developing, while also reducing the need for costly procedures.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 2455 would require full-time fire departments to offer each of their fire fighters a confidential annual occupational medical evaluation at no cost to the fire fighters. The evaluation would be required to include:

- a fluid test;
- a pulmonary function test;
- an electrocardiogram;
- an infectious screening;
- a cancer screening; and
- once every five years, a chest x-ray.

The bill would direct the Texas Commission on Fire Protection to establish minimum standards for the evaluations by June 1, 2024. Fire departments would not be required to offer examinations until July 1, 2024.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.