John A. Mirisch, Mayor

June 19, 2019

The Honorable Henry Stern
California State Senate, 27th District
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 542 (Stern) Workers’ compensation.
   City of Beverly Hills – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Stern,

On behalf of the City of Beverly Hills, I write to you in respectful OPPOSITION to your SB 542 which would create a new presumption of industrial causation for all mental health conditions or mental disabilities that result in a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or mental health disorder that develops or manifests itself during a period when a firefighter, peace officer, arson investigator, parole officer, correctional officer, and fire and rescue services coordinator who work for the Office of Emergency Services is in service to the department.

The City of Beverly Hills acknowledges that California’s police officers and firefighters work in some of the most difficult circumstances imaginable and that the situations they encounter and the duties they perform can have negative impacts on their mental health. However, the City does not believe SB 542 is necessary to ensure that public safety officers, or any other California employee, have fair access to the workers’ compensation system for psychiatric injuries.

The state’s current workers’ compensation system strikes the appropriate balance with respect to psychiatric injuries. California’s workers’ compensation system is studied thoroughly on an annual basis, and yet there is no evidence that the workers’ compensation system is treating PTSD claims unfairly. The Department of Industrial Relations did an “Issue Brief” in 2018 and despite being asked specifically about denial rates for these types of claims, no data was reported that would indicate that public safety officer PTSD claims are being inappropriately denied.
Without evidence that a problem exists or an analysis of the potential costs to local entities, this legislation is not only unnecessary, but also poses significant potential costs to local governments. For these reasons, the City of Beverly Hills must respectfully **OPPOSE SB 542**. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

John A. Mirisch  
Mayor, City of Beverly Hills

cc:  Members and Consultants, Assembly Insurance Committee  
The Honorable Ben Allen, 26th Senate District  
The Honorable Richard Bloom, 50th Assembly District  
Andrew K. Antwi, Shaw / Yoder / Antwi, Inc.