



RYAN GUILLEN
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TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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**GUILLEN SEEKS TO HELP FIREFIGHTERS/PEACE
OFFICERS WITH PTSD**

Expanding Workers' Compensation Eligibility for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

AUSTIN - Texas State Representative Ryan Guillen (D-Rural South Texas) is an author of HB 1983 which will allow for a firefighter or a peace officer to be eligible for workers' compensation benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A public hearing for HB 1983 took place on **Monday, April 3**, before the Business & Industry committee.

"We should take care of the firefighters and peace officers who risk so much for the rest of us to enjoy the quality of life that we have," said Guillen. "HB 1983 is an important step in providing for the long term mental health and wellbeing of our local heroes."

More and more, we are finding cases of PTSD among our first responders. According to deputy executive director of the Texas Municipal Police Association, Mitch Landry, more officers took their own lives than were killed on duty and in motor vehicle accidents in 2015. John Riddle, president of the Texas State Association of Firefighters, said that 6 firefighters in Texas had committed suicide over the last year and half.

"It is time to acknowledge the realities and the dangers that PTSD poses to those that serve our communities," said Guillen.

Current Texas law only covers the broader category of mental impairment, which many say carries stigmas and financial burdens that could prevent some from seeking treatment. This bill will allow for compensation provided that an individual who has served meets the diagnostic criteria for PTSD, specified by the American Psychiatric Association.

"I strongly believe this bill will benefit our service officers impaired in the line of duty, and will help ensure that their mental and physical health is a priority in our great state," said Representative Guillen.

HB 1983 is being considered in the Business & Industry committee. A hearing for the bill took place on **Monday, April 3**.

Representative Ryan Guillen serves ten rural South Texas counties in the Texas House of Representatives, including Atascosa, Brooks, Duval, Jim Hogg, Kenedy, La Salle, Live Oak, McMullen, Starr, and Willacy.

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