



June 6, 2025

The Honorable Lisa Calderon
Chair, Assembly Insurance Committee
1020 N Street, Room 369
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **SB 8 (Ashby) - Peace officers: injury or illness: leaves of absence. – OPPOSE AS AMENDED 3/27/2025**

Dear Chair Calderon,

The undersigned organizations are **OPPOSED** to **SB 8** by Senator Angelique Ashby, which would expand the application of a current law that provides tax-free full salary continuation benefit to select public safety officers in lieu of standard benefits when they are hurt at work. SB 1058 would expand the application of salary continuation, established in Labor Code Section 4850, to specified peace officers employed on a full-time basis by a county of the eighth class. We oppose this bill because there has been no evidence of a specific need for this expanded benefit that would warrant diverting county resources, especially considering tightening state and local budgets.

Under California law, injured employees are generally provided with a wage replacement benefit in the form of temporary disability indemnity benefits in the amount of two-thirds (2/3) of their average weekly wage. There is a maximum benefit level set annually by the state (currently \$1619.15 per week), and the temporary disability indemnity benefits are *not subject to state or federal taxation*.

Some but not all statutorily identified categories of police officers are provided with full wage replacement in lieu of temporary disability under Labor Code Section 4850. This benefit, which pays police officers their full salary for one full year, is also *not subject to state and federal taxation*. When an officer receives this benefit, their net pay is higher than it would be if they returned to work.

We oppose this expansion of salary continuation benefits as proposed by SB 8 because no objective evidence has been offered to demonstrate that this enhanced benefit is necessary, and there has been no evaluation of the cost. Local agencies typically fund workers' compensation costs out of their general fund, and every dollar spent on special enhanced benefits must come from somewhere. Funding for the special benefits proposed by SB 8 will come out of local government budgets, and our coalition would respectfully urge the legislature to fully examine both the justification and cost related to the proposal.

Prior legislation that similarly expanded application of this benefit has been met with caution. Specifically, AB 346 (Cooper, 2019) expanded the application of salary continuation benefits to officers at local school districts and county offices of education. That bill was vetoed by Governor Newsom, who observed that the bill "would significantly expand 4850 benefits that can be negotiated locally through the collective bargaining process." Similarly, in 2024 Governor Newsom

vetoed SB 1058 (Ashby), a version of SB 8 that would have applied statewide, once again noting that the bill would have local fiscal impacts and that this could be negotiated locally through collective bargaining. We believe the same logic applies here.

For these reasons, we respectfully **OPPOSE SB 8 (Ashby)**.

Sincerely,

California Association of Joint Powers Authorities
California Coalition on Workers' Compensation
Public Risk Innovation, Solution, and Management

CC: Members and Consultants, Assembly Insurance Committee