

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 11-243

PA11-243

HB5489

House	8068-8087	20
Public Safety	787-801, 975-979	20
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Transcripts from the Joint Standing Committee Public Hearing(s) and/or Senate
and House of Representatives Proceedings

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tmj/jr/rgd/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

156
June 6, 2011

by roll call. Members to the chamber.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Have all members voted?

Have all members voted?

Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 6364 as amended by House "A" and "B":

Total Number Voting 146

Necessary for passage 74

Those voting Yea 146

Those voting Nay 0

Absent and not voting 5

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The bill as amended is passed.

Any announcement or points of personal privilege?

Hearing none, will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 58.

THE CLERK:

Calendar 58, House Bill Number 5489, AN ACT

tmj/jr/rgd/gbr
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

157
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CONCERNING AN ADDITIONAL STATE FIRE SCHOOL.

Favorable report of the Committee on Appropriations.

THE CLERK:

Representative Dargan of the 115th, you have the floor, sir.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I move acceptance of the Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The question is acceptance of the Joint Committee's favorable report and passage of the bill.

Will you remark, sir?

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Clerk is in possession of LCO Number 8438, may I please call and I be allowed to summarize since it's a strike-all amendment.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Will the Clerk please call LCO 8438 which will be designated House Amendment Schedule "A".

THE CLERK:

LCO Number 8438 House "A" offered by
Representative Dargan, Luxenberg, et al.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The Representative seeks leave of the chamber to summarize the amendment. Is there objection to summarization? Is there objection?

Hearing none, Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Along with my Ranking Member Giegler this is by far a bipartisan amendment along with Representative Camillo and Representative Lyddy on our side along with numerous other people and other senators. The first section deals with a municipal fire police officer, and what that means, Section 2 of the bill deals with volunteers that are underwater search and rescue teams. Section 3 of the bill deals regional fire schools and what would have to happen on a local level in referencing a public hearing within that municipality. And Section 4 just talks about the -- recommends the Commission of Emergency Management Service and Public Protection to reject or approve a regional fire school, and I move for its adoption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The question before the chamber is adoption of House Amendment Schedule "A". Will you remark on the

amendment?

Representative Giegler of the 138th.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in support of the amendment before us which is going to be the bill. A lot of work, hard work, went into this bill. It's not the original bill that we worked with in Public Safety where we had hoped to have a regional fire school created in the City of Danbury. It, however, created a process that we never had before for anyone that wanted to apply for a regional fire school in their district. It also addresses an issue that Representative Camillo could speak to better as far as his fire police in Cos Cob and it also addresses, as we said, Representative Lyddy and Representative Hovey's district that has to do with underwater dive teams.

So it addresses a lot of issues and we're hoping it clarifies it, and I urge my colleagues support.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Camillo of the 110th.

REP. CAMILLO (151st):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I, too, rise in support of this. And I want to thank Representative Dargan and everybody, Representative Giegler and everybody else who was a sponsor on this bill. Certainly Representative Lyddy's and my (inaudible) which deals with the volunteer indemnification part of it. It was a lot of hard work. It's something that, in our state, is very much needed. These are people who save us millions of dollars a year and also put life and limb on the line for us. And this just tightens up the statutes and make sure that, God forbid, if there's ever an accident that they would also receive the same benefits as a paid person who is on the -- the front lines at the -- at an accident scene.

So again, I want to thank everybody who was a part of this effort.

Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

I apologize for getting your district number wrong, because we know the 110th belongs to the esteemed Deputy Speaker Bob Godfrey who will speak next.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

Thank you for that correction. And good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Afternoon, sir.

REP. GODFREY (110th):

I rise in favor of this amendment. Sections 3 and 4 do reflect the original intent of the underlying bill, and that's dealing with the designation of a fire school.

We've been working on this for four years, and we finally got it to the point where -- where it can all come together and the House has an opportunity to vote on this.

Basically, we've had a number of regional schools that can provide training for firefighters at a higher level than a municipal or even a private fire -- fire school. And -- and the City of Danbury has a municipal fire school that physically and trainingwise is ready to provide that service, but needs the designation as a state regional fire school in order to provide it.

This creates the process by which fire schools, regional fire schools can be designated.

I want to thank everybody who's worked on this. We've spent a lot of time this last week pounding out the details. I particularly want to thank the Commission of Fire Prevention and Control and the Connecticut Firefighters Association who have been so helpful as we've crafted this over the last weeks and months. And I strongly urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Chapin of the 67th.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of questions to the proponent, through you, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Section 2, it looks like we're giving municipalities an additional opportunity to provide a tax break for some of our volunteers. I know presently in statute we -- we do this, I believe, for

volunteer firemen, but we're adding fire police officers as well as active members of volunteer underwater search and rescue team. Can the gentleman tell me whether this would automatically add them to any ordinance within a community, or would the community have to actually go back and take an affirmative action to make that happen?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Through you, I -- I think that under (inaudible) rule, it would still be up to that local municipality in order to give that -- that break.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And in reference to Section 1 where we're making some changes to the appointment of a fire police officer, I know we've had a great deal of debate in this chamber about heart and hypertension and certain

diseases that volunteer firefighters may be covered for, is it the gentleman's understanding that by adding additional people to that list through Section 1, they would also receive such coverage?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I don't think that they would be covered under the hypertension but they would be -- be covered underneath -- there's some uniqueness around our state with some volunteer organizations that have a nonprofit status that in their call of the -- of the response within that local community that they would be protected from a legal standpoint.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Chapin.

REP. CHAPIN (67th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I thank the proponent for his answers.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Lyddy of the 106th.

REP. LYDDY (106th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, very quickly. I will rise in support of this amendment and the underlying -- which will become the underlying bill.

Newtown has a very unique all volunteer underwater search and rescue team that was overlooked, and we do need to offer them the same opportunity to provide property tax relief for them. It's a request by the town, and I fully support and urge my colleagues to support this as well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Miner of the 66th.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Good afternoon. If I might, a few questions to the proponent of the amendment, please, through you?

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm focusing my questions on the areas around line 34 through 43, and they have to do with the rewrite of a language about who's responsible at least to defend alleged malicious wanton and willful acts done on the part or by a volunteer firefighter, volunteer ambulance member, and so on.

If I could, through you, under current law, as I understand it, that -- that obligation, because of those acts, if they're alleged, become the responsibility of the individual not the town. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, in some instance where there are suits, they seem to go after everyone not only the individual but the community that that individual is volunteering his or her time.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So in this case, should this amendment pass, the understanding would be that the municipality would have the obligation to defend, even though the claim was made against the volunteer, under the malicious wanton and willful acts. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, that assumption is correct, yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And later on in that same section, I think it states that the volunteer then would have the obligation to reimburse the municipality for the cost of defense funds. Is that correct?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

I'm sorry. Through you, if the good gentleman could repeat the question.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Could the chamber quiet down so that Representative Dargan can hear Representative Miner's questions, please.

Thank you.

Representative Miner, could you repeat the question?

REP. MINER (66th):

Certainly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

I think on line 46 it actually then states that if it is proven or found that the individual act -- individual acted in a wanton, willful or malicious way, that individual then has an obligation to reimburse the municipality for its costs associated with defense. I think I'm correct there, as well.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, that is correct.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Miner.

REP. MINER (66th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

And I thank the gentleman for his answers.

I -- I think we do have somewhat of a duty to include the fire police. I consider the fire police to be the same as ambulance participants and volunteer firemen. But the -- the nuance of this language, ladies and gentlemen, is that the obligation to defend in the case where someone might actually get behind a wheel of an automobile, in my view, drunk when they knew they shouldn't, it becomes a municipality's responsibility, and I think that's different from the way current law exists.

So I'm perfectly willing to the rest of the debate on this mater, but unless someone can correct me, I think I'm right, so that this isn't just about including the fire police under the coverage. This is actually accepting a fair amount of defense liability on the part of the town for acts that otherwise would rest with the individual who was, A, responding to the call. I think someone suggested to me this morning, that if an individual actually was an arsonist that you might have some obligation to defend, so for now, I think I'll just listen and -- and see where it takes us.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Hetherington fo the 125th.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If I may, a question to the proponent.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Please proceed, sir.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is this language for protection and indemnity, is this consistent with what has been the law with respect to others, that is, volunteer firefighters, ambulance drivers, and so forth?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, that is correct, yes.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

Thank you.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

Is it anticipated that the town/municipality actually assumes the defense, or does the individual

hire his or her own attorney, conduct the defense, and then is indemnified by the town for the costs and any resulting damages that are adjudged?

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

I would also agree -- through you, Mr. Speaker, agree with that statement, yes.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Hetherington.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

So the -- the town undertakes the defense just like if you're in a motor vehicle accident, your insurance company undertakes the defense as well as your indemnification.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

I don't think it's really clear, as far as the defense goes, in that there were some incidents in Cos Cob where it was not clear with these nonprofits,

whether or not they were protected, so that's why we have this language in here so these volunteers, at least we think, will now be protected.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Representative Hetherington.

REP. HETHERINGTON (125th):

I thank -- I thank the Representative. It -- sometimes, in these indemnification clauses and various agreements, the person being indemnified has to first go through the defense of a -- of an action, lose, or even win and then be entitled to a response from the town or the contracting party to recover the costs of the defense as well as any matter judged liable. Some such clauses also provide for an advancement of expenses by the indemnifying party. And then there is a question of whether or not the indemnification applies if the person being indemnified loses, but loses in good faith and various nuances like that.

I -- the language appears to me to say that the municipality undertakes the defense. But I think it is not entirely clear, and while I support -- certainly support the idea of including the fire

police it -- it would have been helpful if the indemnity language made it clear at what point the indemnification takes place, and whether or not the municipality actually accepts the defense of the action analogous to the case of a driver and a public liability policy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Representative Taborsak of the 109th.

REP. TABORSAK (109th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. I want to thank Chairman Dargan, Representative Godfrey and Representative Giegler for working with me on this and ensuring that there would be a public hearing in the application process. I think it's a great bill, and I really appreciate their cooperation on that issue to make sure that the public's input is always part of the process in the application for one of these training centers.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Thank you, Representative.

Will you remark further on the amendment? Will you remark further?

If not, I will try your minds.

All those in favor signify by saying aye.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Aye.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Opposed, nay.

REPRESENTATIVES:

Nay.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The ayes have it, and the amendment is adopted.

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

Will you remark further on the bill as amended?

If not, will staff and guests please come to the well of the House. Will the members please take your seats, and the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representative is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber. The House is voting by roll call. Members to the chamber, please.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Have all members voted?

Have all members voted?

Will the members please check the board to determine if your vote is properly cast. If all members have voted, the machine will be locked and the Clerk will take a tally.

Will the Clerk please call the tally?

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5489 as amended by House "A".

Total number of voting	148
Necessary for passage	75
Those voting Yea	143
Those voting Nay	5
Absent and not voting	3.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

Bill passes as amended.

Will the Clerk please call Calendar Number 369.

THE CLERK:

On page 13, Calendar 369, substitute for House Bill Number 6449, AN ACT CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF PERSONS ENTERING OR EXITING A SCHOOL BUS. Favorable report of the Committee on Judiciary.

DEPUTY SPEAKER RYAN:

The distinguished chair of the Transportation Committee, Representative Guerrera of the 29th, you have the floor, sir.

JOINT
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SECURITY

PART 3
659-992A

2011

very proud of what DEMHS has done for us and it would be a shame if we lost that in state government.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Dargan.

Further comments from committee members?

Thanks for being with us and I know we will be talking.

DENNIS McCARTHY: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: We would like to move onto Geoff Harold, please, from Danbury -- Danbury's fire department.

Good afternoon, Geoff.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Good afternoon. Thank you very much for allowing me to speak.

Good afternoon, Senator Hartley and Representative Steve Dargan and honorable members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to present to you this testimony.

I am Geoffrey Herald, Chief of the City of Danbury Fire Department. I am before you to speak in support of House Bill 5489, AN ACT CONCERNING AN ADDITIONAL STATE FIRE SCHOOL. I ask today that you designate the City of Danbury Fire Training Facility a state regional fire school. The following fire departments from the region are supporting this petition: Brookfield, Sherman, New Fairfield, Bethel, Ridgefield, Botsford, Sandy Hook, Stony Hill, Bridgewater, Georgetown and Southbury.

These and several others have used the school for various training activities over the last year. These others include Northville; New Milford; Southbury training school; Dodgingtown, Newtown Hook and Ladder; Brewster, New York; Kensington, and the federal correctional institutions. In total, there have been over 80 uses of the fire department training school in Danbury in the last three years and this has all happened without advertising. All these different departments come to us looking for a place to train.

Fire services have long practiced what is today called regionalization. Through mutual aid we have long worked together in supporting our surrounding communities. Since September of 2001 the need for a regional response to emergencies has become ever more apparent. Fire and emergency services now provide much more than fire prevention and suppression activities. We respond to unknown substances, emergency medical calls, public-service and natural disasters. Response to the threat of terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction will fall first to the fire services in the local community as well.

In addition to responding there are increasing demands made of the fire service for training and certifications from agencies as diverse as the FAA and OSHA. These include local, state and federal mandates. As a result, firefighters across the state spend increasing time in the classroom and on the training ground learning how to deal with these and various issues.

Very few departments can fully meet all possible needs with today's limited fiscal and

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infrastructure capabilities. There are no regional schools in the Northern Fairfield County area. As the Danbury area has grown the need for a facility in our region has grown significantly.

When granted the regional fire school designation will have many benefits to the towns and cities of the region. Having a regional school where the many required programs can be presented locally saves in travel, costs and wear and tear on the vehicles. Importantly, it will save time as the current closest regional school is an hour away.

The State Fire Commission on Prevention and Control has partnered with the regional fire schools to provide modern, thorough training to our fire services, as you've heard earlier in other testimony. By providing a venue where departments can train together the region will gain from common instruction, experience, knowledge and understanding. Through this interaction and mutual exchange of ideas at a regional fire training facility we will learn one another's potentials and capabilities. This symbiosis will assist in the mutual aid responses and cooperation on the emergency scene in our region, state, therefore directly accomplishing the primary goals of regionalization.

During the past three years I have gathered much support for this proposal. The Housatonic Valley of Council of Elected Officials unanimously voted to support the petition at their meeting on 17, October, 2008, and they reiterated their support in January of this year.

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In addition, we have the support of the regional fire chiefs and the Fairfield County Fire Chiefs Association. At their meeting of 23 October, 2008, the education committee for the Connecticut State Firefighters Association voted to support the proposal. They too continue to support this effort. A number of corporate entities have also endorsed the proposal. These include Boehringer Ingelheim, Bedoukian Research, Western Connecticut State University and Danbury Hospital.

As we move towards greater regionalization training with our mutual aid partners will become ever more critical. Adoption of House Bill 5489 will assist in reaching this goal.

Thank you very much for your time in this matter. Please feel free to ask questions or to contact me. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Chief, for being with us.

And our ranking member, Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you, Geoff for coming up, and Skip and Marco Masser -- for joining our illustrious chief.

Danbury has worked continuously with our neighboring communities with a lot of -- a number of collaborative efforts. And that's evidenced by what we have done with our hospital. And we have Danbury Hospital -- has submitted testimony to show that their collaboration with New Milford -- we've had collaboration not only with the fire and the

rgd/gbr

PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
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12:00 P.M.

police, but our regional Y works together and also our legislative delegation who is totally in support of this endeavor.

And I really appreciate your taking the time to come up here and present it to my fellow legislators and hope that you will continue talking to the other legislators outside of our region just to express, as we will do, to express the importance of such a fire school being at the heart of Danbury. And thank you for coming.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Thank you.

I'd also like to point out, by the way, that there's no monetary request attached to this. Right now we're not looking for money. We wouldn't need money or cash flow at all to begin this collaboration. So this is not a dollar value assigned to this proposal.

SENATOR HARTLEY: So you're reading our minds, Chief.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Well, I knew that was going there. And as I said, regionalization is a big byword right now and we've been practicing it. We are truly a regional fire school with all but the name right now. And for the last years it's obviously been very evident that the school is needed in the environment we're in. Upper Fairfield County with 80 uses of a regional fire school is obviously indicative of the need.

SENATOR HARTLEY: So -- and as we go into future, though, would this then become a fiscal request?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: At some point in the future we

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would be looking for some money support through the commission of fire prevention and control to help with costs and such, but we don't anticipate anything like that for at least 18 months.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Chief. I have to say I have occasion to watch Danbury's continued growth sometimes as I'm going 84 down to 684. And I always marvel at how the population has really grown as you just see all of those housing starts up on the hill.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Oh, absolutely. And it's not just in Danbury itself. It's in the entire region around us, so this need is only continuing to grow.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yes. Thank you, sir.

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chief, what does the designation of a state certified school get for the Danbury fire training school?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: It does a couple of things. It solidifies the connection between us and the fire academy, which was spoken of earlier in the earlier testimony by Chief Richards.

The fire academy would then collaborate with us in presenting classes and programs through its many different programs that they design at the academy for everything from trench rescue and advanced firefighting techniques. And predominantly it's allowing us to use the auspices of the fire academy both for soliciting instructors and encouraging other

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area students to participate.

SENATOR WITKOS: And that is not currently being done --

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: No. We're not advertising at all for our school. We have brought in some classes through the auspices of the Danbury Fire Department and made them available to the region, but there's nothing being done by advertising and such at this point.

And as you can see, it doesn't matter whether we advertise or not. We're getting the use and the demand for the school. And eventually the idea of, as I said, 18 months down the road having some money stream to help maintain and upgrade the school is something that we would be looking at, but the primary point right now is we need a facility that is tied into the fire academy on a regular basis.

SENATOR WITKOS: Eighteen months in this building is not a long time at all. And I know that there's a lot of fire schools that are, you know, are seeing funds that are being depleted and they just keep getting moved down the list and you know, it's definitely a worthwhile investment on the State's part to prepare firefighters.

But I'm just curious where, if you had the opportunity to look at requests for other fire schools in the state, as to where you would think Danbury would sit in the pecking order as to the funds delivered.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Absolutely. I'm actually attending those committee meetings for the last three years. We meet with the educational committee and we understand that

that's a process that they've been engaged in now for over eight years trying to get that funding stream actually funded and out there. And I support and encourage that continued process.

Where would we be on the pecking order? Of course, we'd be at the bottom of the heap because we're not looking for infrastructure construction or anything right now. We're not in the plan for that. That plan is for the existing schools, but the very nature and the very condition of the existing schools is why Danbury is doing so well as far as our continued rentals of our school as it is right now.

The area departments that are using our facility and burn facility are coming to us because the other schools are not up and running. The other schools are not able to support their needs. So coming to Danbury has been their only alternative.

And Danbury, through the auspices of Mayor Mark Boughton, we have been able to open up our school to be used by the region and it's that regional collaboration that has gotten us into the situation where we are the point of access for the regional schools for training for live burns.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Chief.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you.

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN: Chief, understanding the importance

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY
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12:00 P.M.

of training on an entry-level or for continuing, whether it be volunteer or career --

I think one of the first burn units I was in was in Derby. And chief Mike Grant, who's with us, I think I was in that building before Scott Air Packs and Intersperos.

And I remember the first guy on the line, whoever he was, ran out of the building when we actually started to burn. And I remember our Instructor Grant was not too happy, but at least it was a learning experience for me, taking the hose and then, Chief, in his ways of yelling at that individual from another community, that was the first one on the line, I will not repeat what Chief Grant said. But whatever hair we did have at that time it was burned that day and I remember that.

And I really understand the importance of these training facilities. And I also understand years back that the Legislature put monies aside for bonding for these facilities and we've been in that fight ever since. It seems to take years working with the Department of Public Works with getting the New Haven facility back online to actually do a live burn and the importance of the training component it is for entry-level fire service personnel to have that component of something there so they could actually do the training.

My question to you since you are in a unique situation, being our border, what sort of responses you have with the communities that border you in New York? And I understand that you do have some sort of agreement in case of a major fire that you have there, but also with training. Can you explain a little bit

to us how that works?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: I certainly can. But first let me go back about 30 years in my own career when now Chief Grant was my training officer as well in the Derby Fire School. And I was one of those people at one point that he kicked in the butt more than once, to get you into that building. So I can certainly know exactly what you're talking about. And here I was in an air pack crawling on the ground and he was standing there looking down at me. So, several times.

The mutual aid agreements for the city of Danbury involve all the surrounding towns and we have reacted to, responded to Brewster. They have come into Danbury to assist us. We have good working relationships and that ongoing training is what's critical to all of this.

As I said in my testimony, we've practiced regionalization in the fire service and have done so for well over a hundred years because none of us can do it alone, except perhaps the very biggest cities, like New York City. And even they have had, on occasion, have had people coming in from the outside to help.

The relationships we have with those other agencies are based on commonality of purpose and one of the things that the regional school will do will be to define that commonality of purpose through commonality of training and that makes that so much simpler when we've had the same training, when we've had the same input from training officers and the same understanding, which goes again to the need to continue to support the Connecticut Fire Training Academy. Because it's that

commonality of training that works throughout the state. So our support, my support and the chief's support for that is critical.

And that's one of the reasons the model works so well in Connecticut, because so many of us train through that academy, whether it's through the CPAT or whether it's through the actual classes. So training with Brewster, training with the surrounding towns is ongoing and will continue to be ongoing. And indeed, this regionalization effort and the regional fire school will only strengthen and booster that.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Chief.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes, Chief. Thank you for being here. Your emphasis on regional, I fully appreciate and understand.

Approximately how many fire schools or academies are there in the state? And how many are moving towards maybe consolidating on a regional basis so that we might be able to fund more training, maybe with less places? Is that a possibility.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: That's under -- I believe right now there are nine fire schools.
(Inaudible.)

There's currently nine regional designated schools and they are spread throughout the state. And the Danbury school would be tenth one in upper Fairfield County.

And the regional designation, it's not a defined geographic area that each one of the school serves. It's simply the designation to

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COMMITTEE

show that they serve multiple communities.

SENATOR CASSANO: And I assume that fire departments are responding with some of their equipment for training purposes as well.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Absolutely.

SENATOR CASSANO: So that the nine or ten regions make sense knowing what it costs to drive a truck and get a truck there.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Well, as I said in my testimony, that's exactly the point. It's difficult and expensive to move an entire department to another training school that's beyond a certain distance. It doesn't make sense. There's no sense or rationality behind it.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. And finally what's the closest training school to Danbury now?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: By geography, I would have to say it's Fairfield, I think, but Stamford, depending on how the crow flies -- I think it's Fairfield, is the one that's actually the closest.

SENATOR CASSANO: Still a hike.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Absolutely. And as I said with the regions, the schools that have come to us, they come from quite a distance away coming up from New Milford and down into our school and; you know, coming in from Newtown and all. So we really do draw the region already.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Senator Cassano.

Chief, if I just might ask you. So there's no fiscal note now and perhaps within 18 months there might be one. I mean, could you, knowing the situation we're in, perhaps go without a request for, I would assume, it's bonding? And -- or what would that do? How would that hinder?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Any initial monies that I would be looking for -- we would be looking for would be simply to support the maintenance of the school. In other words, it would be a relatively low figure. And I can't begin to put a number on it yet, since I haven't gotten the regional school designation. I haven't built a budget for what that may look like. It depends on wear and tear of the facility and issues like that.

We're still continuing to expand the facility. We've recently added two new training prompts in the last year. We've added some electronic heat monitoring equipment to the burn building to allow us to monitor the heat and the level that the building is exposed to. We continue to do that as a state -- or as a city fire school and we're going to continue to need to do that anyway.

So at some point there will be a certain amount of monies, and I'm talking everything from general maintenance to mowing the lawn, to maintaining the fence and the gate, this type of thing. We're not talking a lot of monies in that sense right now.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And then at some point down the road you're talking bricks and mortar, another facility?

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GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Oh, absolutely. I've gotten some input from the local builders in the area. I'm looking to, for example, eventually construct a classroom facility better than the one we have there now and perhaps a training tower.

We're looking for grant opportunities through the national grant process, through DEMHS, and through FEMA. We've tried to pursue some other means and methods of doing that. We will continue to do that regardless of the regional designation or not. The expansion of the fire school for our own troops is necessary so it does not hinge or depend on the regional designation. We still need to improve it.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you so much and thank you for the incredible job you've done in being so creative.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Yeah. Being creative is the way to make it work right now.

SENATOR HARTLEY: No kidding. Thank you.

Further -- oh, Senator Witkos for the second time.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a quick follow-up question.

Right now the City of Danbury owns the Danbury Fire Training School. Is that correct?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Correct.

SENATOR WITKOS: And you can schedule and you can do whatever you'd like because it's yours.

You own it.

If you become a state certified or registered fire training facility, do you lose part of the control where now you -- there may be a council that says, well we're allowing this department to come in on that day to use the burn house or another department? Could you speak to that?

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Well, the training officer -- that sits next to me -- is the one that schedules the training and such. There should be no conflicts in that way. We would be the third state regional school that's owned by a municipality along with Fairfield and Stamford.

I don't think there's another one. Is there? Just those two? New Haven. I'm sorry. New Haven. So we would be the fourth.

And in doing that it still allows -- we have the property ownership and the ultimate authority of the building and we would be working collaboratively with the academy to schedule classes and programs in there, but it doesn't affect our use of the building or does not affect our control of the structures -- of the facility.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you so much, Chief. And if there are no further comments, thanks for being with us.

And we would like to invite Michael Spera.

GOEFFREY R. HERALD: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Chief of Old Saybrook.
Good afternoon, sir.



State of Connecticut

SENATE

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

SENATOR MICHAEL A. McLACHLAN
TWENTY-FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT

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MINORITY WHIP
RANKING MEMBER
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS
COMMITTEE
MEMBER
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

February 22, 2011

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

I am State Senator Michael McLachlan, and I am here to speak in support of House Bill 5489, An Act Concerning an Additional State Fire School.

This legislation would designate the Danbury Fire School training facility as a state fire school.

The Danbury Fire School is a great facility that has been training firefighters in the local community for many years. It is supported by the Danbury community as well as others like Bethel, New Fairfield, Sherman, and Newtown, which also use the facility. I am very proud of the many self-less men and women who are willing to put their lives in danger for others. The Danbury Fire School is yet another example of the importance and legacy of public service.

The designation of the Danbury Fire School as a state fire school will provide the school with a greater prestige, as well as show a way to support for public service. Additionally, this designation will provide the Danbury Fire School with a greater amount of resources, in turn giving those who attend the school opportunities to learn and save lives as an outcome.

I urge the committee to support House Bill 5489, in order to create another excellent facility to train the brave men and women who choose to fight for their communities.

Thank you,

Michael A. McLachlan
State Senator - 24th District



CITY OF DANBURY

FIRE DEPARTMENT

19 NEW STREET

DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

Geoffrey R. Herald
Fire Chief

Phone 203-796-1555
Fax 203-796-1533

**Testimony of Geoffrey Herald, Chief, City of Danbury Fire
Department**

**PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE PUBLIC
HEARING**

22 FEBRUARY 2011

Good afternoon Senator Joan Hartley and Representative Stephen Dargan
and honorable members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. Thank
you for this opportunity to present this testimony before you.

I am Geoffrey Herald, Chief of the City of Danbury Fire Department.
I am before you to speak in support of House Bill 5489: AN ACT CONCERNING
AN ADDITIONAL STATE FIRE SCHOOL. I ask today that you designate the
City of Danbury Fire Training Facility a State Regional Fire School. The following
Fire Departments from the region are supporting this petition: Brookfield,

Sherman, New Fairfield, Bethel, Ridgefield, Botsford, Sandy Hook, Stony Hill, Bridgewater, Georgetown, and Southbury. These and several others have used the school for various training activities over the last year. These others include Northville, New Milford, Southbury Training School, Dodgingtown, Newtown Hook and Ladder, Brewster N.Y., Kensington and the Federal Correctional Institution.

Fire services have long practiced what is today called regionalization. Through mutual aid we have long worked together to support our surrounding communities. Since September of 2001, the need for regional response to emergencies has become ever more apparent. Fire and Emergency services now provide much more than fire prevention and suppression activities. We respond to unknown substances, emergency medical calls, public service and natural disasters. Response to the threat of terrorism with the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction will fall first to the local Fire Services as well.

In addition to responding, there are increasing demands made of the Fire Service for training and certification from agencies as diverse as the FAA and OSHA. These include local, State and Federal mandates. As a result, Firefighters across the State spend increasing time in the classroom and on the training ground learning how to deal with these and other issues.

Very few departments can fully meet all possible needs with today's limited fiscal and infrastructure capabilities. There are no regional fire schools in the northern Fairfield County area. As the Danbury area has grown, the need for a facility in our region has also grown significantly. When granted, the Regional Fire School designation will have many benefits to the cities and towns of the region. Having a Regional School where the many required programs can be presented locally saves in travel and costs and reduces wear and tear on vehicles. Importantly, it will save time as the closest Regional School is an hour away.

The state Fire Commission on Prevention and Control has partnered with the regional fire schools to provide modern thorough training to our Fire Services.

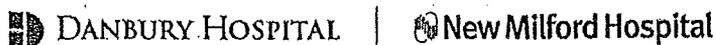
By providing a venue where Departments can train together, the region will gain from common instruction, experience, knowledge and understanding. Through interaction and mutual exchange of ideas at a Regional Fire School facility, we will learn one another's potential and capabilities. This symbiosis will assist in the mutual aid responses and cooperation on the emergency scenes in our region and State, thereby directly accomplishing the primary goals of regionalization.

During the past three years, I have gathered much support for the proposal. The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials unanimously voted to support the petition at their meeting of 17 October 2008. They reiterated their support in January. In addition, we have the support of regional Fire Chiefs and the Fairfield County Fire Chiefs Association. At their meeting of 23 October 2008, the Education Committee for the Connecticut State Firefighters Association voted to support the proposal. They too continue to support this effort. A number of corporate entities have also endorsed the proposal. These include Boehringer-Ingelheim, Bedoukian Research and Western Connecticut State University.

As we move toward greater regionalization, training with our mutual aid partners will become ever more critical. Adoption of H.B.5489 will assist in reaching this goal. Thank you for your time in this matter. If I may be of assistance, please contact me at 203-796-1550.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Herald,
Chief, Danbury Fire Department



Western Connecticut Healthcare

Written Testimony of Western Connecticut Healthcare, Inc.

In Support of HB 5489

An Act Concerning an Additional State Fire School

Public Safety and Security Committee

February 22, 2011

Distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, we submit the following comments on behalf of Western Connecticut Healthcare, Inc. which is comprised of both Danbury and New Milford Hospitals and affiliated organizations spread throughout Fairfield and Litchfield Counties, to convey our wholehearted support for the greater Danbury legislative delegation's proposal to establish a second State Fire School within the City of Danbury.

The greater Danbury area has a proud history of collaboration among hospital, fire and police thanks to the support of their committed personnel and that of our federal, state and local leaders. Those critical collaborations have not only yielded benefits for our communities in the promotion of public safety, but will also serve us in preparing for diminishing financial resources from the federal and state government.

Western Connecticut Healthcare is in a unique position to know first-hand the importance of supporting regional delivery of health and safety services in Region V, and the location of an additional State Fire School in Danbury makes sense on a number of levels. We believe our greater Danbury community has a strong foundation of community-based services and proven partnerships with fire and other public safety personnel. The trend toward regionalization of services, also lends to this proposal. Locating a second State Fire School in that environment would serve as a perfect complement to the School's critical instruction.

We at Western Connecticut healthcare thank you for raising this concept as a committee bill and urge your support for our delegation's important proposal. Thank you for your consideration.
Respectfully submitted this day by Andrea Rynn, Director-Public & Government Relations

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CONNECTICUT
GEN. ASSEMBLY
SENATE

PROCEEDINGS
2011

VOL. 54
PART 22
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SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Also Calendar page 23, Calendar 659, House Bill
is 5489; Madam President, move to place this item on
the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

A final item on Calendar page 23, Calendar 655,
House Bill 6497; Madam President, move to place the
item on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

Moving to Calendar page 24, Calendar 660, House
Bill 6449; Madam President, move to place the item on
the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

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June 8, 2011

Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. Immediate roll call has been ordered in the Senate on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

Madam President, the items placed on the first Consent Calendar begin on Calendar page 10, Calendar Number 478, House Bill 6488; Calendar 480, House Bill 5256.

Calendar page 11, Calendar 513, substitute for House Bill 6557.

Calendar page 12, Calendar Number 535, substitute for House Bill 6226; Calendar 555, House Bill 6259.

Calendar page 13, Calendar 560, substitute for House Bill 5368; Calendar 567, substitute for House Bill 6157.

Calendar page 14, Calendar 574, substitute for House Bill 6410; Calendar 578, House Bill 6156.

Calendar page 15, Calendar 591, House Bill 6263; Calendar 594, substitute for House Bill 5508; Calendar 595, substitute for House Bill 62 -- 5263.

Calendar page 16, Calendar Number 606, substitute for House Bill 6581; Calendar 609, substitute for House Bill 6501.

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Calendar page 17, Calendar 610, substitute for House Bill 6224; Calendar 613, substitute for House Bill 6453.

Calendar page 18, Calendar 614, substitute for House Bill 5068; Calendar 628, substitute for House Bill 5008; Calendars 633, House Bill 6489.

Calendar page 19, Calendar 635, substitute for House Bill 6351; Calendar 640, House Bills, 6559.

Calendar page 20, Calendar 642; House Bill 6595.

Calendar page 21, Calendar 645, substitute for House Bill 6267; Calendar 648, substitute for House Bill 5326; Calendar 650, substitute for House Bill 6344.

Calendar page 22, Calendar 651, substitute for House Bill 6540.

Calendar page 23, Calendar Number 655, substitute for House Bill 6497; Calendar 657, substitute for House Bill 6262; Calendar 658, House Bill 6364; Calendar 659, House Bill 5489.

Calendar page 24, Calendar 660, substitute for House Bill 6449.

Calendar page 36 -- correction -- Calendar page 33, Calendar Number 390, substitute for Senate Bill 1181.

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Calendar page 36, Calendar Number 481, House Bill
5472.

Calendar page 37, Calendar Number 584, substitute
for House Joint Resolution Number 34; Calendar 585,
substitute for House Joint Resolution Number 54;
Calendar 586, House Joint Resolution Number 65,
Calendar 587, House Joint Resolution Number 66.

Calendar page 38, Calendar 588, House Joint
Resolution Number 80; Calendar 589, House Joint
Resolution Number 63; Calendar 590, House Joint
Resolution Number 35; Calendar 620, substitute for
House Joint Resolution Number 45.

Calendar page 39, Calendar Number 621, substitute
for House Joint Resolution Number 47; Calendar 622,
House Joint Resolution Number 68; Calendar 623,
substitute for House Joint Resolution Number 69;
Calendar 624, substitute for House Joint Resolution
Number 73.

Calendar page 40, Calendar 625, substitute for
House Joint Resolution Number 81; Calendar 626, House
Joint Resolution Number 84.

Madam President, I believe that completes the
items placed on Consent Calendar Number 1.

THE CHAIR:

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SENATE

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June 8, 2011

Thank you.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk, please call for a roll call vote, and the machine will be open.

THE CLERK:

The Senate is now voting by roll call on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber. The Senate is now voting by roll call on the Consent Calendar. Will all Senators please return to the Chamber.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Gomes?

If all members have voted; all members have voted? The machine shall be locked.

And, Mr. Clerk, will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Motion is on adoption of Consent Calendar
Number 1.

Total number voting	36
Those voting Yea	36
Those voting Nay	0

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Those absent and not voting 0

THE CHAIR:

Consent Calendar passes.

The Senate will stand at ease for a moment.

(Chamber at ease.)

SENATOR LOONEY:

Madam President?

THE CHAIR:

Yes, Senator.

The Senate will come to order.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Yes. Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda Number 5 for today's session.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk.

THE CLERK:

Madam President, the Clerk is in possession of Senate Agenda Number 5, dated Wednesday, June 8, 2011.

Copies have been made available.

THE CHAIR:

Senator Looney.