

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

PA 14-179

HB5531

| | | |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| House | 1655-1663 | 9 |
| Senate | 3455, 3474, 3480-3481 | 4 |
| Public Safety | 547-559, 579-589, 620- <u>626, 743-747</u> | 36 |
| | | 49 |

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**CONNECTICUT
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE**

**PROCEEDINGS
2014**

**VOL.57
PART 5
1361 – 1680**

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April 22, 2014

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Necessary for passage | 71 |
| Those voting Yea | 141 |
| Those voting Nay | 0 |
| Those absent and not voting | 9 |

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed.

Mr. Clerk, 189.

THE CLERK:

On Page 47, House Calendar 189, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Development, Substitute House Bill 5531 AN ACT CONCERNING MUTUAL CONSOLIDATION OF DISPATCH FACILITIES.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan, one more time.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move for acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Will you explain the bill, please, sir.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This bill will

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allow municipalities that are consolidating municipal PSAP dispatch centers to establish a governing board. It has no fiscal impact as the members of such boards will be appointed by those respective communities and they're in a nonpaying position. There are three communities in southeastern Connecticut, East Lyme, Waterford and New London that want to enter into this compact agreement with this regional dispatch.

It's a bill that came forward from the first selectmen of East Lyme and Waterford and the mayor of New London. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of questions to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Proceed, madam.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

I don't think Representative Dargan knows I'm asking him a question.

Representative Dargan, as stated in this bill, it required that each municipality be represented by a governing board. Why did the towns feel it necessary

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to come to the state rather than work out the
agreement between themselves?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan, do you care to respond?

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is a very good
question that seemed to take these three respective
communities eight years to do that, but with my good
Ranking Member and myself, we were able to work it out
with two meetings. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

What problem, Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

The original bill established an authority with
specified powers, but what are the powers that you
feel that this governing board, that they envision
what their powers will be?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, the problem that they
had when they were looking at this was the waiver of
contractual agreement that they would have with the
three respective communities.

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They realized that it would be a cost savings to the three respective communities, if in fact they consolidated their dispatch system and work in a more cohesive manner respectively within those three communities and would offset any costs that they would incur. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

I thank him for his answer, and just one more question. Who do you see the employer being? Will it be the respective towns, or will they be under the governing board?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, this is another very good question, and that was something that we had difficulty understanding, but it would still be in cooperation with those three respective communities. If in fact those individuals are hired already through those respective communities, they would be employees of that said community. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

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Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER (138th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

This bill had a lot of discussion within the Committee and it did pass unanimously and I urge my colleagues' support. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Thank you, madam. Representative Orange.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question through you, to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Proceed, madam.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Chairman Dargan, I just have one question regarding the governing board.

I take it that all three towns have an equal share in this dispatch consolidation?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan, do you care to respond?

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, that is correct.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

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Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And another question, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the proponent of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Proceed, madam.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Should in the future any other towns that come along wish to join this particular regional dispatch facility, would they also have equal governance over the dispatch as well?

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, through that E-911, they already have that opportunity to do that, and we encourage other communities to do that, to cost share their dispatch systems, whether it be police, fire, and/or EMS and there's been a number of instances throughout the State of Connecticut that they have already done that. Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Orange.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

Thank you. Thank you, Representative Dargan, and

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I of course already know that. But if there were to be a dispatch center that say is like thinking of consolidating with another dispatch center and they already have a board of governance and all that that follows them, that also would follow them to this new regional dispatch center? Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN (115th):

Through you, Mr. Speaker, it would depend on the amount of communities that were involved in that. If it's two or more, it might be four. It depends on how many communities and what type of consolidation that they would like to put in place, never mind the monies that the state is putting forward in order for communities to offset any new telecommunications or enhanced 911 or Everbridge system that they would be equal partners and it would have to be drawn up that way.

Through you, Mr. Speaker.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Representative Orange.

REP. ORANGE (48th):

Thank you. Thank you, Representative Dargan, so

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that would answer my legislative intent question, that other towns could certainly join and be equal partners.

So I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and have a good afternoon.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

You, too, ma'am, thank you. Will you remark further on the bill? Will you remark further on the bill?

If not, staff and guests please come to the Well of the House. Members take your seats. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll.

The House of Representatives is voting by Roll.

Will members please return to the Chamber immediately.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

Have all the members voted? Have all the members voted? If so, the machine will be locked. The Clerk will take a tally. And the Clerk will announce the tally.

THE CLERK:

House Bill 5531.

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| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Total number voting | 142 |
| Necessary for passage | 72 |
| Those voting Yea | 142 |
| Those voting Nay | 0 |
| Those absent and not voting | 8 |

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The bill is passed. Mr. Clerk, 218 please.

THE CLERK:

On Page 13, House Calendar 218, Favorable Report of the Joint Standing Committee on Insurance and Real Estate, Substitute House Bill 5502 AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE PROPERTY AND CASUALTY AND SURPLUS LINES INSURANCE STATUTES.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The distinguished Chairman of the Insurance Committee, Representative Megna. Representative Megna just one moment. Getting just a tad loud. Thank you. Representative Megna.

REP. MEGNA (97th):

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Joint Committee's Favorable Report and passage of the bill.

DEPUTY SPEAKER GODFREY:

The question is on acceptance and passage. Would

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SENATE**

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SESSION**

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SENATE

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May 7, 2014

SENATOR LOONEY:

Calendar 448, House Bill 5145, move to place on the
Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Calendar 446, House Bill 5150, move to place on the
Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

And Calendar 452, House Bill 5531, move to place on
the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Moving to Calendar Page
14 where there are also five items. The first,
Calendar 457, House Bill 5516, move to place on the
Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Calendar 455, House Bill 5325, move to place on the
Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

So ordered, sir.

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Calendar 334, House Bill 5339.

Calendar 336, House Bill 5056.

On Page 7, Calendar 345, House Bill 5443.

On Page 9, Calendar 417, House Bill 5410.

On Page 10, Calendar 420, House Bill 5258.

Calendar 421, House Bill 5263.

Calendar 424, House Bill 5439.

On Page 11, Calendar 429, House Bill 5581.

On Page 12, Calendar 445, House Bill 5418.

Calendar 438, House Bill 5336.

On Page 13, Calendar 453, House Bill 5133.

Calendar 446, House Bill 5150.

Calendar 452, House Bill 5531.

On Page 14, Calendar 457, House Bill 5516.

Calendar 455, House Bill 5325.

Calendar 456, House Bill 5440.

Calendar 459, House Bill 5321.

Calendar 461, House Bill 5140.

On Page 15, Calendar 468, House Bill 5450.

Calendar 465, House Bill 5341.

On Page 16, Calendar 474, House Bill 5337.

Calendar 469, 5538.

Calendar 473, House Bill 5328.

On Page 17, Calendar 496, House Bill 5115.

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SENATOR LOONEY:

If we might pause for just a moment to verify a couple of additional items.

Madam President, to verify an additional item, I believe it was placed on the Consent Calendar and Calendar Page 30, on Calendar Page 30, Calendar 592, Substitute for House Bill 5476.

THE CHAIR:

It is, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

It is on? Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, finally, Agenda Number 4, Madam President, Agenda Number 4 one additional item ask for suspension to place up on Agenda Number 4 and that is, ask for suspension to place on the Consent Calendar an item from Agenda Number 4.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President, and that item is Substitute House Bill Number 5566 from Senate Agenda Number 4.

Thank you, Madam President. If the Clerk would now, if we might call for a vote on the Consent Calendar.

THE CHAIR:

Mr. Clerk. Will you please call for a Roll Call Vote on the Consent Calendar. The machine will be opened.

THE CLERK:

An immediate Roll Call has been ordered in the Senate.

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An immediate Roll Call on Consent Calendar Number 2 has been ordered in the Senate.

THE CHAIR:

If all members have voted, all members have voted, the machine will be closed. Mr. Clerk will you please call the tally.

THE CLERK:

Consent Calendar Number 2.

| | |
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| Total number voting | 36 |
| Necessary for adoption | 19 |
| Those voting Yea | 36 |
| Those voting Nay | 0 |
| Those absent and not voting | 0 |

THE CHAIR:

The Consent Calendar passes. Senator Looney.

SENATOR LOONEY:

Thank you, Madam President. Two additional items to take up before the, our final vote on the implementer. If we might stand for just, for just a moment.

The first item to mark Go is, Calendar, to remove from the Consent Calendar, Calendar Page 22, Calendar 536, House Bill 5546. If that item might be marked Go.

And one additional item, Madam President, and that was from Calendar, or rather from Agenda Number 4, ask for suspension to take it up for purposes of marking it Go, that is House Bill, Substitute for House Bill 5417. Thank you, Madam President.

THE CHAIR:

Seeing no objection, so ordered, sir.

SENATOR LOONEY:

**JOINT
STANDING
COMMITTEE
HEARINGS**

**PUBLIC
SAFETY
PART 2
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tell you that I understand what they go through, because I used to wake up in the middle of the night screaming that I couldn't help the boy, and so I can truly understand.

I mean I was in the military for 30 years, but in that you sort of expect something could happen. You don't want it to happen, but you sort of expect well, you know, somebody could get hurt, okay. But this was a three-year-old boy versus a school bus. And I just wanted to let you know, you have my support on anything on that.

CHRISTOPHER TRACY: Thank you, and I'm sorry.

REP. NICASTRO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative. If there are no further comments, thanks for being with us, Chris.

I would like to now go back to our public official list and invite Dan Steward, First Selectman of Waterford. Thank you, Dan.

DANIEL STEWARD: Thank you, Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, and the Committee for hearing us this morning. I am accompanied this morning by Betsy Ritter, who is my State Representative from the town of Waterford and parts of Montville.

This morning we're regarding the Bill No. 5531, and in deference to what I've heard this morning from the State levels, we're looking at

something quite a bit different in this particular application. In the regionalization effort that we've been asked to do as municipal leaders, is to assist the State in various ways of trying to eliminate some of the complications and duplication that we have. I've provided you written testimony, and my comments will be relatively short this morning.

But dispatch is a primary where we can do some consolidation, and I think what we're looking at here is three communities that have agreed to do this, but when we go to the mechanism that's provided by State Law which right now is an interlocal agreement, we're blockaded in that process as we get down into the very detailed orientation of how that would work.

We've had a number of meetings with our attorneys to try to come up with an alternative which is what the bill represents in front of you this morning.

We tried to do it; we've worked really hard. It's been eight years that I've been working on dispatch from my experience, and I would speak for the other communities that we feel this is an opportunity for us to do something good for our communities and not endanger public safety.

Obviously what we're asking for here is a bill that allows us to do this, but we have to do it with research, and we have to make sure we do it correctly so that we don't end up in an alternative situation as was described earlier by the various speakers.

What we're looking at here is really an authority concept which we've seen work for other divisions of business, one of those being the health districts that we utilize throughout the state, and those health districts operate as an authority that is individualized to the various communities it supported with a board of directors, and with our oversight of them.

Also the trash-to-energy plant that we have down in Preston is another example of that same authority which is part of what this represents to us.

We feel that this is a strong statement of how we can do this, and it's an enabling legislation. It's not saying you have to do this. But it would allow other communities to also have the same opportunity. And I know from the public safety -- I'm sorry, not the public safety community, but the telephone community, where they've given to us, the leadership, and said we need you to do this because we have too many PSAPS in the state of Connecticut. But too many to too little is not the right answer. Somewhere it has to be a marriage of the right numbers, and we feel three, at this point, is an accurate number for our purposes. So I'll open it up for questions.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yes. Thank you very much, Dan, and Representative Ritter, thanks for being with us this morning.

I'd just would like to ask: To your knowledge, are there any other towns that have done this?

DANIEL STEWARD: I have not seen other towns that have done it under a town format. There is a unit in Litchfield which was created prior to communities. It's not run by the community. There's KX out of Colchester which is also an independent entity; it's not run by the communities. Those were established well before, if I'm correct. We've -- when we've looked at this from the multiple towns doing this, we have not found a location where they were able to do it.

SENATOR HARTLEY: What about the prospect of Middlebury, that area? Was there not something going on there to -- ?

DANIEL STEWARD: I have not seen that one.

SENATOR HARTLEY: You don't know that. Okay, so you feel like you need specific legislation to do this, that you cannot proceed.

DANIEL STEWARD: We have -- we have been unable to proceed with the legal advice we've gotten from our three town attorneys.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Can you be more specific than that?

DANIEL STEWARD: The blockage is with the personnel issues where you're coming from three different communities of personnel, trying to get them to work into the environment. You've got different Union contracts, trying to make them

all agree. You have the ability of who owns the project; who owns the overhead; who owns the property that we're located on; and how do all those costs get split up equally between the different communities.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Okay. You're right, though, Dan, about the fact that in, and I think the Kimball Report pointed this out that we've got 106 PSAPS and Massachusetts has like six. It's a similar state, so somewhere in there are efficiencies, I think, to be had. The question is what -- what and how is the right way to do it without sacrificing our goal which is, of course, emergency and public dispatch which we had a lot of conversation about a different piece of that a little bit earlier.

Yes, so we have some comments.

Yes, Representative Jutila, to be followed by Representative Orange.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Dan, for your testimony, and for coming up today, and also thank your colleagues from New London, and my hometown of East Lyme who are behind you there, and will testify in a few minutes. I know that you all have been working very hard on this, and you have a good committee composed not just of elected leaders, but also representatives from all of the emergency services: police, fire, EMS. And I believe that you're -- you're approaching this the right way.

For the first hour today you heard mostly negative testimony about the State Police consolidation in eastern Connecticut, and you could probably get a sense that many members of this committee clearly want to unwind that and go back to the way things were. So the timing may not be perfect to be hearing your proposal today. So can you speak to that and -- and put the members of the committee at ease that what you're doing is different from the State Police consolidation, and maybe talk about how you intend to achieve the efficiencies and the cost savings that apparently are not there in the State Police consolidation? And it doesn't have to be you, Dan, that does this. It -- you know, I know Paul from my town is -- a resident trooper town, may have a different experience to offer. I know you have the experts who are going to testify later, so that's up to you, but I think that somehow we need to get that before the Committee.

DANIEL STEWARD: If I may then, the -- what I see in this package is based on my experience with the telephone company primarily, where we found ways to consolidate different things, and this is back in my history. Consolidation has its values, but it also has its detractions, and if we don't do it correctly, then you are absolutely correct, that we would be in another situation which the state has already entered into. We do not want to go there. That's one of the reasons that we have a representative currently here, the Lieutenant from our police force; we have a representative from East Lyme Fire; we have a representative from the City of

New London; as well as the Chief Elected Officials from both communities.

We understand the issues of health care and safety, and how we get this all done. In order to do what we're trying to do, we looked at the consolidation. There are -- initially there will be some small savings. As it grows over time and is successful, we have the opportunity for more savings for the municipalities. But the point being, we do not walk into this with derailing any of the existing services. The existent services that we have in East Lyme and New London, those two PSAPs would stay in place until this proves itself to be successful. That hasn't happened necessarily at the state level because, as I heard this morning, some of that material is already dismantled. That's not in our plan at this point.

So our plan is to do this, to try it out and make sure it works. This legislation would allow us to try it and make it work between the communities, and that's just really what our ask is. So there are economics to it, yes. In the long term we do not displace any employees; all the employees that are currently working maintain their employment, but going forward there could be attrition where we find some savings. And that's my point of it, and I'll leave the rest to my compatriots who have better comments than I.

REP. JUTILA: Thanks, Dan, and I know you've brought the right people up here, so I think that at

the end of the day here the committee will be well informed. So thank you again.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Representative Orange. Thank you.

REP. ORANGE: Thank you for coming in this morning and bringing your esteemed State Representative, Betsy Ritter, with you.

I would just like to talk a little bit about the PSAPs that we have within our state. A lot of the cities have their own PSAPs, so the City of Bridgeport, the City of West Haven, New Haven, and you know, the larger areas all have their own PSAPs, so that's one of the reasons that we have so many.

KX in Colchester, where I live and where my EMS and fire are dispatched from, and some of the towns that I represent, is run by a board of directors and what have you. There is also one, QV, and then there's Valley Shore, and they're all regionalized dispatch centers as you know. Have you considered joining one of those that are already in existence?

DANIEL STEWARD: We have considered that, particularly with KX. We've actually had quite a few discussions with KX, but their financial situation is not stable at this point, if I'm correct, and we are looking at actually inviting them to come and join us as well. But that's something that initially we want these three to work before we go and expand. Expansion can create difficulties as you're seeing in the state. KX supports, I believe,

nine communities on fire primarily, because I believe the police is through the --

REP. ORANGE: Fire, EMS, and they do dispatch for the East Hampton Police. They have their own police force and KX dispatches for that police force as well, as well as the paramedics.

DANIEL STEWARD: And they were all co-located with Troop K's dispatch as well.

REP. ORANGE: Well Troop K isn't there anymore, but they're still in the building, yes.

DANIEL STEWARD: Correct.

REP. ORANGE: Now when we come down to this Kimball Report, I have a problem with the Kimball Report because the Kimball Report says that regionalized dispatch centers that are paid by the State, the formula that exists now is by how many towns that you're dispatching for is the formula for the money that you would get from the State to regionalize.

So you said that KX is having difficulty. Well one of the towns left KX and I believe that there was a little stir about that financially. This is where the Kimball report, and I think this committee should look into this Kimball Report, because in my estimation, the Kimball Report is correct in saying that the formula should be changed to population, not by towns, which would be a more fair way to distribute the money. The Kimball Report recommends that and I would actually recommend to this

committee that we follow those instructions and do it that way, because you're -- you're talking of a high-populated area whereas you would be -- if you were to regionalize, you would then be reimbursed at a higher rate than just having three towns. But by the State formula -- have you had a chance to look at the Kimball Report?

DANIEL STEWARD: No I have not.

REP. ORANGE: I suggest that you go online and see - or Betsy can get it for you. And there is a section in there that talks about this, and I think that this would relate directly to your issue, and I think that if we were able to change that here on this committee, you would have better luck at your end result. I just wanted to bring that up.

Good to see you. Thank you.

DANIEL STEWARD: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Orange.

Representative Giegler.

REP. GIEGLER: Thank you for coming here today. I just wondered, for clarification, are you looking to regionalize all of your dispatch which is police, EMS, and fire? Not just police?

DANIEL STEWARD: Not just police, no. It is all three.

REP. GIEGLER: And you have your own police department?

DANIEL STEWARD: Waterford and New London have their own police departments. Waterford dispatches for EMS today for both -- for all three communities. And we also -- I'm sorry, let me rephrase that. We dispatch the hospital paramedics for the three communities, EMS being the ambulance service is actually done through the various communities themselves. And fire is done by the three communities.

REP. GIEGLER: But you would bring ambulance, EMS --

DANIEL STEWARD: Yes.

REP. GIEGLER: -- fire and police all together.

DANIEL STEWARD: Yes. That is correct.

REP. GIEGLER: Okay. Thank you so much.

DANIEL STEWARD: You're welcome. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Giegler. Further questions?

You mentioned that there might be some parallels with, for example, health districts that are already formed on a regional basis. So how have they formed without having specific legislation, and -- and you would request specific legislation to do this?

DANIEL STEWARD: They have specific legislation --

SENATOR HARTLEY: They do?

DANIEL STEWARD: -- similar to what we presented to you in this bill. That's what this was drafted based on.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Based on that?

DANIEL STEWARD: Ledge Light, Uncas Health District, Ledge Light Health District, and SCRRA, which is S C R R A, which is the Regional Resource Recovery Agency.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Which allows them to form a board, and the board is their oversee entity.

DANIEL STEWARD: Yes.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And then the board then does the negotiation with regard to contract, salary, that kind of thing?

DANIEL STEWARD: Correct.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Because you were talking about having problems with -- with dealing with three different entities.

DANIEL STEWARD: Correct. This gives them one management force versus having three different management forces, and as we tend to change positions with some of our elected officials where we may not be there in two or four years, then we have to worry about that access, also.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And then, for example, how has -- you say Litchfield has a consolidated unit?

DANIEL STEWARD: Litchfield has a consolidated unit, but I believe it's a 501(c)(3) organization --

SENATOR HARTLEY: Uh-huh.

DANIEL STEWARD: -- which eliminates them from municipal government. It does create different entities for them, and rather than go to a 501(c)(3) where we would lose the municipal grant structure, which is something that helps to benefit our dispatch program, and keep it solvent.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Got you. The same thing with KX?

DANIEL STEWARD: I don't know the management of KX Pure. I believe Paul can answer that better than I can.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Okay. All right, are there further questions? If not, thanks very much for being with us.

DANIEL STEWARD: Thank you for your time and your (inaudible.)

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yes.

And now we would like to invite Michael Mersch.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Okay, we would like to invite Paul Formica from East Lyme on House Bill 5531. Good -- good morning, I guess.

PAUL FORMICA: Good morning.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yeah, for a moment or two.

PAUL FORMICA: Thank you. Good morning, Senator Hartley, and Representative Dargan, Members of the Committee.

I'm Paul Formica, the First Selectman of the Town of East Lyme, and the current past chair of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments, and I speak today in support of Raised Bill 5531, AN ACT CONCERNING MUTUAL CONSOLIDATION OF DISPATCH FACILITIES.

East Lyme, Waterford, and New London have entered into agreement to study the feasibility of a regional dispatch entity that would serve our three towns. The study committee had representatives from each town working together to come up with a plan that made sense for each and all of the three towns. That plan was recently completed and presented to each town's legislative body.

The committee is now working on the implementation portion of that plan, and this bill is vital to creating the authority necessary to establishing the regional entity under which the center would fairly operate.

While we feel that saving money is secondary to enhancing public safety, the expanded capabilities that would occur when multiple municipalities join together under a common entity established by this bill would do both.

Once established as a three-town regional center, I believe the groundwork will have been completed to add more towns in the near future, thereby creating more efficient and safer communities.

The future is here with regard to the communications and the technology necessary to achieve this goal, and I thank you for creating the language to allow this to happen, and I urge for your support.

And I'd be happy to discuss what I believe the differences between the consolidation and the regionalization should -- should you be interested.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much for being with us, first of all, and bringing this regionalization option to us.

Yes, sure, I for one would be interested in your comment on the -- the dispatch within a reasonable amount of time.

PAUL FORMICA: I'm sorry, would you say that again?

SENATOR HARTLEY: No, I said yes, I -- you said you would comment on our previous bill on the -- on the consolidation.

PAUL FORMICA: Well what -- what we're talking about is three contiguous towns with three independent police forces looking to regionalize dispatch services and other -- in other words the intent of the MORE Commission is to try to create efficiencies through communities, and this will, I think, go to that.

The State Police consolidation is really encouraging barren barracks and -- and, you know, large tracts of towns that are together. For example, you know, the east, Troop B has 16 towns; Troop K has 14 towns; Troop D has 13 towns. So we're talking about three towns that the dispatch capabilities will be handled by experienced dispatchers that will take the calls directly and will actually have more management oversight as a result of an on-site dispatch manager that will control the flow and make sure that problems in the workplace, in terms of fatigue and other things, will -- will not be present.

So, you know, we think it's very, very different as -- as a -- I am a Resident Trooper town, one of the four large Resident Trooper towns in the state. We have 22 police officers, one part-time officer, and a Resident Trooper Sergeant. Waterford, I believe, has 40-some odd police officers, and New London 60-some odd. So, you know, we work together on a regional basis in many capacities now, so this would seem to be a natural fit to do so.

SENATOR HARTLEY: So, Paul, a lot of groundwork has been done here and then you're feeling that you need this umbrella by which to formalize it and deal with contractual issues and so forth. Do you have -- should this pass -- any projected timeline for when your regional center is -- could be boots on the ground, opened up for business?

PAUL FORMICA: Well we want to first make sure that the committee does prudent and thoughtful consideration of all of the issues, and they've worked for almost two years doing that. The implementation program may take another year to establish, but we want to make sure that we have -- have taken into consideration everything that we can possibly do. Quite frankly I think the labor issues will be, you know, the big sticking point, but certainly not something that can't be overcome. By creating this regional entity through which all the towns have representation, and through which it manages the facility, it will allow for an easier expansion and -- and much greater oversight and it will take it out of the hands directly of municipal operations. Even though we propose to have the facility located initially in Waterford's center, we certainly propose expansion beyond that in the near future.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Paul. I appreciate you being here and the work that you've done on this. Further questions?

Yes, Representative Jutila.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you again for coming up, Paul, to testify today. Good to see you here as always.

PAUL FORMICA: Always a pleasure to see you, sir.

REP. JUTILA: You know when we were talking about the other bill, on undoing the -- the State Police consolidation, some of the other members had some examples of some of the things that had occurred, and I might have mentioned the situation that I think you're familiar with, too, where there was an incident out in Black Point in our town in Niantic, and apparently the dispatcher at the regional State Police dispatch center had never heard of Black Point and had no idea where that was, or what its geography was or anything. And I -- I think that with bringing together three shoreline towns, my assumption would be that probably most of the dispatchers in the three towns are pretty familiar with the other two towns. I don't think we're going to have a problem where one of the East Lyme dispatchers who's working in Waterford, who gets a call at Ocean Beach, is not going to know where Ocean Beach is.

But they probably are not quite as intimately familiar as the individuals in each of their towns. Is there any special training that they're going to have prior to actually implementing this to make sure that they are thoroughly familiar with all the aspects, or as many aspects as possible, of the three towns?

PAUL FORMICA: Well I'm sure there definitely will be training. You know, we expect to have, you know, a minimum of three dispatchers on, and there could be -- those dispatchers each from a variety of the towns. I mean it doesn't all have to be all East Lyme dispatchers on one shift handling three towns. So there could be a way to satisfy that there. But you're right. Most people know pretty much exactly where most locales are, and if not, you know, you have that screen on in front of you that will isolate the location as soon as you plug in the address, and I'm sure that will jar some memories of -- of these experienced dispatchers who are -- been in both of -- all three of these locations for some time. So, you know, we expect to preserve these jobs that -- that are currently existing, so it's not like we're bringing in new people, so.

REP. JUTILA: So between existing familiarity, technology, some training, you -- you're confident that, you know, they're -- they're going to be able to do the job, and this is going to be a lot different than the consolidation that the State Police have undergone.

PAUL FORMICA: Well we're going to have, you know, direct phone calls to dispatchers with oversight there with an on-site manager. So I think it's -- it's completely different in terms of the level of oversight and management that's happening now, and the fact that, you know, you're taking, you know, each barrack that does a dozen or more towns, you know, and

all of that pressure going on in one regional dispatch area for the State Police is, you know, that -- that's a huge amount of towns for, you know, four or five, you know, dispatchers that may have to do just to start with. We're starting small and hopefully to expand slowly so that perhaps in one year we have this three, and in two or three years we might have six or eight more, and, you know, as we establish a good foundation we're able to grow -- to grow the whole program. And as the Chairman so aptly noted, Massachusetts has six, Rhode Island I believe has three to four, California has half a dozen. You know, so it -- it exists, and -- and we just have to find the right mix.

REP. JUTILA: Okay, thanks again for your answers. I -- I just think it's important that we have this dialogue so that the members of this committee clearly see the differences between these two bills that are very different that happen to be before us today.

So thanks again, Paul.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Jutila.

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning, Mr. Formica.

I guess I'm a little confused. So right now your town has a Resident Trooper Program, and they dispatch out of one of the barracks.

PAUL FORMICA: Troop B is a dispatch for the police. We have our own dispatch center that the Troop -- that dispatches both fire and EMS. But we have incorporated police dispatching into that. So the way we handle it is when we get a call, a 911 call, as it's dispatched to the barracks, we also dispatch our local guys to give them a heads up. Because of the fact we have 22 officers, we can get a jump on it, understanding that the Troop B people may be 20, 30 miles away or wherever they are, so we can get people on site quickly.

SENATOR WITKOS: So the three towns that we're talking about, each of them have their own dispatch centers, or they're receiving -- when the 911 calls ring in their respective towns, it goes to a facility in -- in their town, and you're looking at regionalizing the three towns to have one dispatch center to cover the three towns?

PAUL FORMICA: That's correct.

SENATOR WITKOS: And then do all three towns have their own constabularies in addition to the State Police?

PAUL FORMICA: Well I am the only Resident Trooper town.

SENATOR WITKOS: Okay.

PAUL FORMICA: The other two towns have their own full-time police chiefs with police forces, so.

SENATOR WITKOS: And so when we -- have you had any feedback from folks? If you're currently -- I'll call it dual-dispatching, so you -- you send out your own officers and the same time you're notifying the State Police who respond to incidents in your town. Have you had any issues where things were delayed -- response times from the time the call was received to the time it was relayed?

PAUL FORMICA: In terms of the State Police response?

SENATOR WITKOS: Correct.

PAUL FORMICA: You know, we know just simple logistics are going to create those opportunities for delay. That's why -- that's why we dispatch.

SENATOR WITKOS: I don't mean travel time. I'm talking about picking up the phone, putting it into the computer terminal, and it goes to the barracks, and they dispatch. Because we've heard testimony this morning that -- that there's a lag in time of when the call taker gets it, puts it in, and it goes to the dispatcher, so by the time the officer on the road gets the call, there's been an elongated period of time for them to respond. Since you're doing the dual-notification, you're sending your officers out and at the same time you're notifying the State Police, have you noticed that there's a length of -- duration in time for them actually getting the call and dispatching it out? Irregardless of where the

officers -- the troopers happen to be at the time.

PAUL FORMICA: I -- I have not noticed any of that particular time because our guys are on -- on scene very quickly, so that's really all that's important as far as I'm concerned. We handle most of the stuff, and if it's a major event, then the, you know, the Troop sends it special forces in, so.

SENATOR WITKOS: And your dispatchers are civilian, or are they sworn officers?

PAUL FORMICA: They're civilian.

SENATOR WITKOS: And is there a -- a prescribed training program that they -- they have to take in order -- you don't just hire them and then just put them on the desk. They -- they go through some type of certification?

PAUL FORMICA: We have very experienced full time that work Monday through Friday, and then we have a number of part-time dispatchers that -- that work the weekends, and all of which have to be trained with a full^~timer. There is a training program that we go through to become familiar with. You know, it's a different type of job --

SENATOR WITKOS: Certainly.

PAUL FORMICA: -- so you have to have a different mindset to -- to do the job.

SENATOR WITKOS: Right.

PAUL FORMICA: Sometimes people make it and sometimes they don't, but --

SENATOR WITKOS: And is that a -- if you're aware -- a State-certified program, or a State-accredited program, or is that just something that you just do in your community, you have a book and say okay you've done this test and you've done this, now you're ready to sit on the desk?

PAUL FORMICA: We -- we make sure they adhere to our standards.

SENATOR WITKOS: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Senator Witkos. Further comments? Seeing none, thank you so much for being with us, Paul.

PAUL FORMICA: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And we're going to move on to invite Maryann Herbert. Is Maryann here? Yes. Maryann, you're still hanging with us. Thank you.

SB 427

MARYANN HEBERT: Good morning, Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, and esteemed Members of the Committee. My name is Maryann Hebert. I am the immediate past president and a member of the Connecticut Realtors. The Connecticut Realtors would like to submit testimony in

If not, thank you so much for being with us.

DENISE BELMONT: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: We would now like to invite -- no, it looks like we're done -- Daryl Finizio, the Mayor of New London. Thank you, also, for staying with us. We've been reading about you, Daryl.

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: Oh, all good things, I'm sure.

Thank you, Senator Hartley, and Representative Dargan. I appreciate the opportunity to address you and the Members of the Committee, although I know I cannot do as good a job as Julia just did, but I will make my best effort.

I join my colleagues, the First Selectmen of East Lyme and Waterford in voicing my support for Bill 5531. I will not add to the very good points that they have already raised, but merely give you a little more context to what we are doing.

The City of New London is only 6.46 square miles of land area. We are only approximately one mile wide. On a daily basis, if an individual is picked up in East Lyme with a medical condition, they are brought to L and M Hospital in New London. If there is a fire in Waterford, New London fire departments are responding alongside Waterford fire departments at the fire scene in Waterford.

When New London holds an event like Sailfest or OpSail that brings hundreds of thousands of people to our regional community, it is officers and emergency management personnel from all three communities that are coordinating our efforts and our response in those major incidents, as is the case when we do drills related to Millstone Power Plant, and the list goes on and on.

So to address Representative Jutila's point, I would say that the difference between our regionalization efforts and the regionalization efforts that you've seen at the State Police level is that we are not engaging in a process of consolidation. No staff positions are being eliminated. Our individual PSAP centers are being maintained as backup centers and redundancies for an existing system.

What we are doing here is merely creating better coordination for the cooperative efforts that are already ongoing on a day-to-day basis between our three communities. This is something that emergency management personnel in our three communities have wanted, not just for years, but for decades, and in this more short-term process leading up to this current implementation effort, emergency management personnel from all three communities have been involved at every stage in the process, and are in a clear consensus that this is the right thing to do, and the right step to take.

But we are before you today merely for the enabling legislation to set up the governance

body that will allow us to operate this regional center. While there are some cost efficiencies by coordinating our efforts, for purchasing, for maintenance of supplies, materials, et cetera, the primary driver of this is service provision and enhanced public safety, not cost savings. Although, and I can speak for my own community, although I'm sure the First Selectmen would agree, if we can save a dollar, I'll take it.

But that said, I would gladly make myself available for any questions that you might have.

SENATOR HARTLEY: First of all, thank you for spending the time and waiting here. I know it's been a long morning into the afternoon. Are there questions?

Yes, Representative Orange.

REP. ORANGE: Thank you for coming. Now I know why it took me two hours to get out of New London for OpSail when I was way down in the -- in the -- along the river. Now that I have the miles, it's really something.

Listen, you're talking about this consolidation, and there's rumor and talk about taking in more towns in the future. So if you were to take in towns like Colchester and Salem, perhaps Lebanon, or Franklin, or Bozrah, how would that work, and how would the dispatchers there know our particular northern part of the county?

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: Well I'm not here to speak in favor of that. I have signed on, and the City of New London administration has signed on for a partnership with Waterford and East Lyme. We believe that we know our respective towns very, very well, and that, as I've said in my testimony, we coordinate our efforts now, so this would merely be an enhancement of what I believe are our existing operations.

The potential exists for the addition of other communities down the road, but that would be an entirely separate debate, separate and apart from what I'm here to testify on today which is in support of enabling legislation to allow these three communities to move forward, which I would support. But any future expansion of this system, should this system be expanded, would have to be thoroughly vetted as this consolidation has been vetted now by a working group with all the stakeholders involved actively formulating this first feasibility study, and now implementation plan over a period of two years. And I would think that should this system prove successful, and be examined for expansion, that a similar expansive process would have to go through, and I would not be prepared to endorse any further expansion until I saw the results of that process.

But based on what I've seen of our current coordinated efforts, and what has come out of this working group for this specific proposal, this is a very good proposal that will enhance

public safety for our three communities as long as we can get the governing structure that we need to legally make it possible.

REP. ORANGE: Okay, thank you. How long did this procedure take so far?

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: Well our retired Fire Chief, who was a 41-year veteran of our city fire service, began examining these potential efforts back in the nineteen-eighties, and I know that First Selectman Stewart has mentioned that he has worked on this for eight years, but this immediate working group has been working for about two years and I have to commend the members of our team, and many of them are here today and took the time and have sat through, you know, this morning's entire proceeding because this is something that is very important to them and has been something that we have been working towards for a very long time, but they specifically have done exhaustive work in the last two years and I really applaud them for their efforts.

REP. ORANGE: Very good, and -- and I suggest to you and to -- to the people that are sitting here that have worked so diligently on this project to view the Kimball Report and see if you can get hold of Bill Youell over in the Department of Emergency Management and Public Protection, because I think that following that formula would be a lot easier for you as well.

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: Absolutely. Thank you for the suggestion, Representative.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Orange.

Representative Jutila.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Daryl for coming up and spending the morning and part of the afternoon here with us. I know that you obviously had to make adjustments in your schedule to do it, because you told me this morning you had about an hour and that was it, so we appreciate your making that adjustment.

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: I -- I only cancelled four meetings, so we're good.

REP. JUTILA: Then again, maybe you just wanted to get out of the office for a while. But, you know, just to reiterate, once again between your testimony and the testimony of your counterparts from East Lyme and Waterford, I think that you've answered the important questions that some of the committee members might have had about this, again in light of the other bill on undoing the State Police consolidation. I think you've explained how you're going to gain efficiencies and better serve the public safety and possibly save some money in the process and, as you said, if you can save a buck, that's a great thing, but safety is really the -- the critical thing here.

You've also explained why you need the enabling legislation, and that you're not able to do

what you're trying to do under existing statutes, and it's clear that you're prepared to implement it in a -- in a thoughtful and orderly fashion. So I hope that all of the questions that any committee members might have -- have been answered and once again, thank you for your testimony.

MAYOR DARYL FINIZIO: Thank you, Representative, and I don't believe that I've added much to what was said earlier, only to underscore the critical points. But I did stay for the duration to be able to submit my own testimony, because I do believe that this is that important of an initiative in our community, and I wanted the committee members to know that we take it very seriously, and hope that we're able to move forward soon with what I think will be a very good structural improvement to our public safety apparatus for our three communities.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yes, thank you very much for being with us. If there are no further questions, Mr. Mayor, I thank you for being here. Okay.

And so we would like to invite Tom Bean, and also with Tom is going to be Eric Brown.

Tom, thank you for being with us, and Eric as well, and my apologies for this very long wait. I don't know what the trick is when you get here like in pre-dawn hours or whatever to kind of, you know, get to the top of this list, but anyway, thanks for staying with us.



**Testimony
Betsy Gara
Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST)
Before the Public Safety & Security Committee
March 11, 2014**

RE: HB-5531, AN ACT CONCERNING MUTUAL CONSOLIDATION OF DISPATCH FACILITIES.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) respectfully submits the following comments relative to HB-5531, AN ACT CONCERNING MUTUAL CONSOLIDATION OF DISPATCH FACILITIES, which authorizes two or more municipalities to create a regional dispatch authority

Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are the facilities operated on a twenty-four hour basis to receive 9-1-1 calls and dispatch emergency response services or transferring or relaying 9-1-1 calls to other public safety agencies. The PSAP is the first point of reception of a 9-1-1 call.

COST supports efforts to encourage PSAPs to regionalize in ways that will reduce costs without undermining public safety response. Some towns have explored opportunities to regionalize PSAPs but have faced barriers due to existing labor contracts or other factors.

We therefore *support the intent* of HB-5531 to authorize two or more towns to create a regional dispatch center. However, COST is concerned that the bill will allow more towns to split off from existing PSAPs and form new regional entities on a random basis, without regard for the impact on the existing PSAP. This may weaken the financial base of the remaining towns and undermine public safety. could be harmful because it may weaken the financial base of the existing organizations.

COST recommends that the state develop a comprehensive statewide strategy to encourage PSAP consolidations and address barriers to consolidation that towns have faced.

We would be happy to work with lawmakers and other municipal organizations to craft legislation to facilitate voluntary consolidations as part of a statewide strategy.



CHAIRMAN HARTLEY, CHAIRMAN DARGAN AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE—GOOD MORNING.

MY NAME IS PAUL M FORMICA, FIRST SELECTMAN OF EAST LYME, PAST CHAIR OF THE SECCOG.

I SPEAK TODAY IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL 5531- AN ACT CONCERNING MUTUAL CONSOLIDATION OF DISPATCH FACILITIES. EAST LYME, WATERFORD AND NEW LONDON HAVE ENTERED INTO AN AGREEMENT TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF A REGIONAL DISPATCH ENTITY THAT WOULD SERVE OUR THREE TOWNS. THE STUDY COMMITTEE HAD REPRESENTATIVES FROM EACH TOWN WORKING TOGETHER TO COME UP WITH A PLAN THAT MADE SENSE FOR ALL THREE TOWNS. THAT PLAN WAS RECENTLY COMPLETED AND PRESENTED TO EACH TOWN'S LEGISLATIVE BODY. THE COMMITTEE IS NOW WORKING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PORTION OF THE PLAN AND THIS BILL IS VITAL TO CREATING THE AUTHORITY NECESSARY TO ESTABLISHING THE REGIONAL ENTITY UNDER WHICH THE CENTER WOULD FAIRLY OPERATE. WHILE WE FEEL THAT SAVING MONEY IS SECONDARY TO ENHANCING

PUBLIC SAFETY, THE EXPANDED CAPABILITIES THAT WOULD OCCUR WHEN MULTIPLE MUNICIPALITIES JOIN TOGETHER UNDER A COMMON ENTITY ESTABLISHED BY THIS BILL WOULD DO BOTH. ONCE ESTABLISHED AS A 3 TOWN REGIONAL CENTER I BELIEVE THE GROUNDWORK WILL HAVE BEEN COMPLETED TO ADD MORE TOWNS IN THE NEAR FUTURE THEREBY CREATING MORE EFFICIENT AND SAFER COMMUNITIES.

THE FUTURE IS HERE WITH REGARD TO THE COMMUNICATIONS AND THE TECHNOLOGY NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. THANK YOU FOR CREATING THE LANGUAGE TO ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN. I LOOK FORWARD TO RETURNING NEXT YEAR TO REPORT ON OUR SUCCESS. I URGE AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

⑥

FIFTEEN ROPE FERRY ROAD



WATERFORD, CT 06385-2886

Senator Joan V. Hartley
Representative Stephen D. Dargan
Public Safety and Security Committee
Room 3600, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Bill # 5531 An Act Concerning Mutual Consolidation of Dispatch Facilities

Dear Senator Hartley and Representative Dargan;

For the past eight years, I, as First Selectman of the Town of Waterford, have been working to regionalize our dispatch function with other towns in New London County. I have collaborated with East Lyme and New London in this effort with little success in completing the effort until recently. There was agreement to move forward but the implementation steps forced us to begin again. We currently have a team of people working out the various details for this merger, but there have been some roadblocks. Initially, we attempted to use inter-local agreements to establish this group but there were details that could not be worked out between the towns. Our most recent efforts that are now in front of you to resolve the various issues and allow us to move forward are the result of three town attorneys, representatives from all three towns and the administration of all three towns. We have identified several other organizations that have been able to organize as a municipal authority which gives the powers required by an independent entity representing several municipalities.

We are very aware of the State's interest in regionalizing services and dispatch is a great one to begin with. We believe this bill (#5531) will allow for this function to happen not only for our three towns, but for many other communities across the State of Connecticut.

By creating an authority, we are removing the obligation of any one town having to have the ownership and responsibility directly. There is a continued ownership of the authority and responsibility to fund and staff the organization, but on an equalized basis for all expenses.

We have experience with several other authorities where this type of legislation has been enacted and is working very well for the communities they serve. My reference is to the Health districts and to SCCRA which is our trash to energy facility in Preston, CT. My request from the Town of Waterford is to enact this bill to allow our municipalities the flexibility we need to implement the regionalization of our dispatch organizations. Although I do not speak for New London or East Lyme, I know their organizations have been a party to the drafting of this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this act and your time in reviewing it.

Sincerely,



Daniel M. Steward
First Selectman
Town of Waterford
(860) 444-5834

CC: Senator Andrea Stillman
Representative Elizabeth Ritter
Representative Ed Jutila
Representative Ernie Hewett