



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 129**

January Session, 2005

House Bill No. 5313

*House of Representatives, April 4, 2005*

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through REP. DARGAN of the 115th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT EXPANDING THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF POLICE OFFICERS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 7-294d of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
3 *October 1, 2005*):

4 (a) The Police Officer Standards and Training Council shall have the  
5 following powers:

6 (1) To develop and periodically update and revise a comprehensive  
7 municipal police training plan;

8 (2) To approve, or revoke the approval of, any police training school  
9 and to issue certification to such schools and to revoke such  
10 certification;

11 (3) To set the minimum courses of study and attendance required

12 and the equipment and facilities to be required of approved police  
13 training schools;

14 (4) To set the minimum qualifications for law enforcement  
15 instructors and to issue appropriate certification to such instructors;

16 (5) To require that all probationary candidates receive the hours of  
17 basic training deemed necessary before being eligible for certification,  
18 such basic training to be completed within one year following the  
19 appointment as a probationary candidate, unless the candidate is  
20 granted additional time to complete such basic training by the council;

21 (6) To require the registration of probationary candidates with the  
22 academy within ten days of hiring for the purpose of scheduling  
23 training;

24 (7) To issue appropriate certification to police officers who have  
25 satisfactorily completed minimum basic training programs;

26 (8) To require that each police officer satisfactorily complete at least  
27 forty hours of certified review training every three years in order to  
28 maintain certification, unless the officer is granted additional time not  
29 to exceed one year to complete such training by the council;

30 (9) To renew the certification of those police officers who have  
31 satisfactorily completed review training programs;

32 (10) To establish uniform minimum educational and training  
33 standards for employment as a police officer in full-time positions,  
34 temporary or probationary positions and part-time or voluntary  
35 positions, provided any police officer in a full-time position shall hold  
36 an associate's degree from an institution of higher education accredited  
37 by the Board of Governors of Higher Education or regionally  
38 accredited;

39 (11) To visit and inspect police basic training schools and to inspect  
40 each school at least once each year;

41 (12) To consult with and cooperate with universities, colleges and  
42 institutes for the development of specialized courses of study for  
43 police officers in police science and police administration;

44 (13) To consult with and cooperate with departments and agencies  
45 of this state and other states and the federal government concerned  
46 with police training;

47 (14) To employ an executive director and any other personnel that  
48 may be necessary in the performance of its functions;

49 (15) To perform any other acts that may be necessary and  
50 appropriate to carry out the functions of the council as set forth in  
51 sections 7-294a to 7-294e, inclusive;

52 (16) To accept contributions, grants, gifts, donations, services or  
53 other financial assistance from any governmental unit, public agency  
54 or the private sector;

55 (17) To conduct any inspection and evaluation that may be  
56 necessary to determine if a law enforcement unit is complying with the  
57 provisions of this section;

58 (18) At the request and expense of any law enforcement unit, to  
59 conduct general or specific management surveys;

60 (19) To develop objective and uniform criteria for granting any  
61 waiver of regulations or procedures established by the council;

62 (20) To recruit, select and appoint candidates to the position of  
63 probationary candidate, as defined in section 7-294a, and provide  
64 recruit training for candidates of the Connecticut Police Corps  
65 program in accordance with the Police Corps Act, 42 USC 14091 et  
66 seq., as amended from time to time;

67 (21) To develop, adopt and revise, as necessary, comprehensive  
68 accreditation standards for the administration and management of law  
69 enforcement units, to grant accreditation to those law enforcement

70 units that demonstrate their compliance with such standards and, at  
71 the request and expense of any law enforcement unit, to conduct such  
72 surveys as may be necessary to determine such unit's compliance with  
73 such standards;

74 (22) To appoint any council training instructor, or such other person  
75 as determined by the council, to act as a special police officer  
76 throughout the state as such instructor or other person's official duties  
77 may require, provided any such instructor or other person so  
78 appointed shall be a certified police officer. Each such special police  
79 officer shall be sworn and may arrest and present before a competent  
80 authority any person for any offense committed within the officer's  
81 precinct.

82 Sec. 2. Section 29-3a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
83 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2005*):

84 After graduation from the State Police Training Academy, and before  
85 becoming a sworn member of the Division of State Police within the  
86 Department of Public Safety, all state police trainees shall have  
87 received a high school diploma or an equivalent approved by the state  
88 Department of Education and shall hold an associate's degree from an  
89 institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of  
90 Higher Education or regionally accredited. Nothing in this section  
91 shall prohibit prospective state police applicants from being admitted  
92 to the State Police Training Academy without having received either  
93 the high school diploma or equivalent and the associate's degree.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2005	7-294d(a)
Sec. 2	October 1, 2005	29-3a

**PS**            *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 06 \$	FY 07 \$
Public Safety, Dept.	GF - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 06 \$	FY 07 \$
Municipal Police Departments	STATE MANDATE - Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant

**Explanation**

The bill requires that all police officers in a full-time position must hold an associate’s degree from an institution of higher education accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education or regionally accredited. The bill states that an associate’s degree must be acquired by the time a trainee graduates from the police academy, and becomes a sworn member of the Department of Public Safety.

The bill could result in a potential significant cost to the Department of Public Safety and Municipal Police Departments. It is anticipated that police officer salaries, negotiated under collective bargaining agreements, will increase when officers acquire an associate’s degree.

The bill states that prospective state trooper applicants cannot be denied admission to the academy for failing to meet the amended educational requirement. This could result in an additional cost to the Department of Public Safety. Once a trainee has been admitted to the academy, they are considered a state employee and are eligible for tuition reimbursement. Since it is required that sworn officers hold an associate’s degree, trainees without such degree will be required to

enroll in classes and will use tuition reimbursement from the state to subsidize their cost.

This bill will impact the next trooper training class, which is expected to begin in January 2006.

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**OLR Bill Analysis**

HB 5313

***AN ACT EXPANDING THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF POLICE OFFICERS*****SUMMARY:**

This bill increases the minimum educational qualification for employment as a full-time state or local police officer from a high school diploma to an associate's degree issued by a regionally accredited college or one accredited by the Board of Governors of Higher Education. In the case of state, but not local, police officers, the bill requires that trainees obtain the degree before they are sworn but allows prospective applicants to be admitted to the State Police Training Academy before they receive the degree. In the case of local police officers, the bill appears to apply to current police officers as well as new hires.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2005

**BACKGROUND*****High School Diploma Requirement for Local Police Officers***

The Police Officer Standards and Training Council regulations require that, as a condition of appointment as a probationary candidate, an applicant must have graduated from a high school or received an equivalency certificate from a state-approved program (Conn. Agencies Reg. § 7-294e-16). A probationary candidate is a police officer who has satisfied preemployment requirements, is employed by a law enforcement unit, and is still in training.

***State Police Officers***

By law, the education requirement for state police trainees must be met before they can be sworn as police officers.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 22 Nay 0