

**March 3, 2006  
Raised Bill #5544.**

**Good Afternoon**

**My name is Tom Flaherty and I am the Executive Director of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. I am here this afternoon on behalf of our Chairman, Chief Anthony Salvatore of the Cromwell Police Department and the Council to speak about Raised Bill No. 5544, "An Act Concerning Police Officer Training Requirements". Unfortunately, I am here to oppose this and I'd like to explain why.**

**I would like to discuss the operations of our Agency in regards to Recruit Training and to thank you for the opportunity to do so.**

**The Council has determined the mandatory length of the Basic Recruit Curriculum in conjunction with Sec. 7-294d (5) "To require that all probationary candidates receive the hours of basic training deemed necessary before being eligible for certification, such basic training to be completed within one year following the appointment as a probationary candidate".**

**The current curriculum for our Basic Training Academy is 22 weeks or 880 hours of Basic Training.**

**This curriculum was developed in response to an extensive Job Task Analysis and Job Description started in 1996 and completed in 1998 with the adoption of this curriculum. The current full curriculum is validated by the Job Task Analysis and reflects all the skills, knowledge and practical experience that a Probationary Candidate is required to have to begin participation in a four hundred hour Field Training Program.**

**Full completion of this curriculum is consistent with our efforts to provide standardized, state of the art Police Training. Recruit Training must by its definition be standardized to assure that Police Officers understand and employ best practices.**

**Due to Task Force Assignments, Mutual Aid Agreements and the ability to exchange personnel for various specialized activities Police Officers**

**must be trained to the same level with the same standardized curriculum.**

**The proposed Bill seems to suggest a tailored or a personalized number of hours and subjects with credit given for degrees obtained in College. This is somewhat unusual in the context of good training doctrine in that the POST Council has no control over the quality or quantity of Criminal Justice topics taught in a college environment nor any comfort that Probationary Police Officers will be trained to the same level and standard.**

**College courses and degrees vary from Professor to Professor in content, style, methods of instruction and intensity with no guarantee that they will comply with the Job Task Analysis nor current curriculum.**

**The ideal system would be to award College credits for successful completion of the Basic Recruit Academy Curriculum thereby encouraging further education to complete a degree program while rewarding the Recruit for his or her efforts here at the Academy. The long term benefit would be better educated and diverse Officers. Our Recruits get some credit now depending on the institution. We would ask that this be standardized, at least through all State schools and institutions. We have been working toward this end and intend to continue.**

**In addition, there are many Legislative Mandates already proscribed in the Basic Recruit program such as Rape Crisis Intervention, Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Juvenile Matters, Gang Related Violence, Crimes Motivated by Bigotry or Bias and Suicide Intervention procedures.**

**The proposal provides a dilemma in determining whether we eliminate courses from the Basic Program in lieu of a College Degree and if so, what topics should be eliminated.**

**As an example, in April of 2005 the Council increased the Basic Training Curriculum by 40 hours to provide Counter Terrorism Training to all Recruit Officers in the State consisting of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Personal Protection Equipment, State and Local Anti**

**Terrorism Training, Critical Incident Response, Suicide Bombers, ITAC – ICALL Radio systems and NIMS. Rather than shorten our Program, we had to extend it.**

**There is a distinct difference in Adult Education techniques between Training which we provide and Education which falls within the realm of a College or University degree.**

**Such theories as developing “Muscle Memory” to protect oneself and others is generally not included in a College Education but critical to the Training of a Police Officer.**

**A review of the latest version of the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training Reciprocity Handbook reveals that all 50 states have established Basic Recruit Hours ranging from 320 to 1032 (Published in 2000). I expect in fact that the next version being prepared as we speak will feature even more hours of Basic Training.**

**Police Administrators and our Council have recognized that the duties of a Police Officer are complex and diverse and great effort and expense has gone into developing a validated job task analysis and curriculum to reflect what Police Officers actually do and an appreciation of the consequences of not being able to perform those duties in a competent manner.**

**Our Council also recognizes the value of better educated Police Officers. We appreciate the intention to make our profession more attractive to college graduates and to reduce duplication if possible. The concept is worthy, but the execution would be impractical under the current circumstances.**

**If POST were given the means and resources to certify selected college courses, (to ensure that content and instruction met POST standards), there might be a way to offer an abbreviated recruit curriculum to graduates. I expect that this might be a complex and perhaps very expensive undertaking.**

**I and my staff would certainly be willing to work with the Legislature to explore this concept further and I thank you for the opportunity to speak.**