



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

342 North Main Street, West Hartford, Connecticut 06117-2507

(860) 586-7506 Fax: (860) 586-7550 Web site: www.cpcanet.org

Testimony to the Judiciary Committee

February 23, 2007

Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & James Strillacci, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

We speak in favor of **RB#7066, AAC Arrest Powers of Local Police.**

We seek the Committee's support in amending CGS Section 54-1f to allow local police officers on duty but outside their respective precincts to arrest without warrant for *any offense* if the officer takes the offender in the act or on the speedy information of others. Current law allows this only if the offense is a felony.

We have advocated for similar bills in past sessions, because the amendment would:

- allow police to compete with mobile criminals, who don't stop at municipal boundaries.
- allow officers to charge prisoners for acts committed in their custody but outside their precinct (e.g., officer takes a prisoner to court or to a hospital, and the prisoner assaults the officer, damages the police car, or attacks medical personnel).
- allow one agency to investigate and file charges in mobile incidents which cross boundaries (car-jacking, abduction, e.g.) instead of requiring multiple agencies to handle segments of the incidents.
- facilitate mutual aid between municipal departments.
- increase deterrence by and respect for police, who could act on offenses they see while out of precinct (on which they now have no authority to act.)

The Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Coordinating Council voted to support the proposal. They understood that it would aid homeland-security efforts by adding thousands of trained officers to the eyes and ears keeping watch in our state. Though a terrorist attack itself is a felony, it may be solved or prevented by an officer acting on a lesser offense, or merely suspicious activity. (E.g., a traffic violation caught the Oklahoma City bomber.)

Emergency managers saw the proposal's value in aiding regional cooperation, as regionalism has been a requirement of federal homeland security funding. They noted its use in credentialing responders—local police officers are certified to statewide standards by POST, their uniforms and identification quickly recognized.

Fire chiefs understood the proposal's benefit in encouraging inter-agency assistance, because mutual support is a cornerstone of their profession.

A small-town executive was eager for a means to obtain police mutual-aid assistance; he said his town is patrolled by state police, who have not allowed mutual-aid pacts.

A hospital administrator noted that a biological emergency would require heavy security at his hospital but would overwhelm the city police, necessitating suburban police to fill the gap. He said the bill would clearly help the situation.

Amending 54-1f will increase the number of police available to protect Connecticut's citizens by allowing police to take action wherever it is needed.