

Good morning Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Steven Rief, and I am President of the Connecticut State Police Union.

I am here today to speak in **OPPOSITION** of:

HB 7066 'AN ACT CONCERNING ARREST POWERS OF LOCAL POLICE'

Currently, CGS 54-1f empowers Connecticut police officers to make arrests of persons, without previous complaint and warrant, if the officer has reasonable grounds to believe the person has committed, or is committing, a **FELONY**. Also, peace officers, as defined by Statute, shall arrest, without previous complaint and warrant, any person for any offense *in their jurisdiction*, when the person is taken or apprehended in the act or on the speedy information of others.

This bill would expand the misdemeanor arrest authority for municipal police officers and, in so doing, would create many unnecessary issues as they relate to increased liability exposure to Connecticut towns and insurance carriers, workers' compensation claims, individual Police Departmental policy procedures, previously agreed to Mutual Aid compact agreements and operational questions and problems for the Department who takes custody of any prisoners turned over to them.

LIABILITY EXPOSURE TO TOWNS:

If an arrested person makes a complaint of unnecessary force, or injury during the arrest, a claim of an illegal search, or violation of civil rights, which agency will ultimately become responsible? Which agency conducts an investigation to determine the facts of the claim? Which town insurance carrier becomes responsible for any payment of expenses or settlements? Will this law affect any towns' insurance premiums? Can the towns be sued for Failure to Act, if the town leaders have policy restrictions, which do not allow officers to make such arrests outside of their jurisdiction?

WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS:

If an officer is injured during an arrest, is it clear which town will assume responsibility for any workers' compensation claim? Which town will determine the level of compensation? Will any injuries sustained have an impact on the towns long-term retirement benefit to the officer? Which town bears the cost of the officers' representation?

INDIVIDUAL POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

If a town police department have policies concerning issues such as: proper use of tasers, pursuits, reporting requirements, radio procedure, prisoner care or processing and those policies are inconsistent with the town in which an arrest was made, what happens? Does this become a problem for the towns and or the officer?

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS:

Currently, CGS allow for individual towns to enter into mutual aid compact agreements with other towns for public safety issues. Most of these mutual aid agreements allow for the same arrest authority and protection for the out of town officers who are performing duties pursuant to the agreement. Those towns that wish to *voluntarily* enter into such agreements have done so and draft appropriate mutually agreed upon language. Will this bill have a forced *negative impact* on compact agreements?

OPERATIONAL ISSUES:

This bill proposes that *whenever a police officer makes an arrest under this subsection, such police officer shall immediately present the arrested person to the local police department or state police troop having jurisdiction over the precinct* in which the arrest was affected. Besides the issues previously mentioned, I will bring to your attention only some of the anticipated operational problems:

- Which departments' report form is used?
- Who takes custody of evidence?
- Who takes responsibility for the processing, care and arraignment of prisoners?
- Who will be responsible for any re-arrest warrants that may be issued?
- If an incident is ongoing (i.e.: pursuit), which department has command and control of the officers' action?
- Are all police departments going to be equipped with police radios that will enable officers to communicate effectively?

In summary, I believe that there are enough unanswered questions that would convince this committee that this bill if approved would place the towns of Connecticut, and its officers, in unnecessary jeopardy.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully,

Steven Rief
President