



EASTERN CONNECTICUT EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES COUNCIL, INC.

12 Case Street / Suite 211 / Norwich, Connecticut / 06360

Phone 860 / 889-0089

Testimony

House bill 5809

March 12, 2008

On behalf of the Eastern Region EMS Council, I'd like to offer this testimony in support of house bill 5809, An Act concerning the recruitment, training, initial certification and retention of emergency services personnel.

The diminishing pool of personnel resources has been a topic of concern over the past decade, and possibly before. It initially impacted the volunteer system and has spread into the career sector. The Department of Public Health testified as to the declining number of certified/licensed personnel. While those numbers are important information for a study of recruitment and retention, there are some areas that I believe should be included in the study.

The study must identify the types of factors that affect system involvement. I have outlined a few of them below.

- Increased hours of training to obtain certification;
- Training requirements in addition to EMS certification training, such as OSHA, sponsor hospital, and individual department requirements;
- Too many responsibilities not related to EMS care, such as having to do fundraisers for the department;
- Stressful work environment and psychological impact of difficult calls;
- Wages, benefits, and out of pocket expenses;
- Certification required for non-EMS jobs, such as security guards, lifeguards, or physician's office staff.

It is not merely a matter of getting people certified/licensed as EMS personnel, but assuring that they are active in the EMS system. *Local cultural beliefs and values, which may be hard to put into quantifiable terms, must also be studied in addition to the financial, psychological, and time-constraint issues that keep certified personnel out of the system.*

Our Council supports the study being done. We thank the committee for raising this bill, and for the opportunity to express our support.

Jonathan S. Lillpopp
Regional Coordinator/Executive Director