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March 2, 2009

Testimony in support of:

***Raised Bill No. 1010 AN ACT CONCERNING EXPOSURE TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS (LCO No. 3947)***

**Members of the:**

**Public Safety and Security Committee**

Our Public Safety workers deserve to be able to serve their local communities in safety. When an exposure to a communicable disease occurs or is suspected, an employee should have the right and confidence of appropriate notification, evaluation, and available treatment where deemed necessary.

The original national Ryan White CARE Act (1990) required emergency response personnel be notified when exposed to life threatening diseases while providing care. The clauses protecting emergency personnel were removed (2006) by congressional staffers in a renewal of the bill. The reason for the removal is unclear; some allege the staffers removed the clauses protecting emergency personnel because they did not understand why they were in the original Ryan White act (Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 H.R. 6143). Because of confusion raised by the 2006 legislation, some emergency response employers might conclude that there is no longer a need for a 'designated infection control officer' (DICO), required by the 1990 legislation. Some employers might not provide post-exposure follow-up or other protective measures for employees unless specifically identified in a law. It is in the best interest of both the employer and the employees to have a trained DICO to manage exposures immediately after they have occurred.

Until Congress reinstates the employee exposure provisions of 'Ryan White', every emergency response organization must make an effort to ensure its DICO position remains intact. *Raised Bill No. 1010* would correct on the state level the deletions made in 2006 until Congress is able to remedy the situation on the national level. Council 15, representing sworn police officers in sixty two Connecticut municipalities supports *Raised Bill No. 1010* and requests you vote this bill out of Committee.