

CONNECTICUT
STATE POLICE UNION

Good morning, Chairman Dargan, Chairwoman Stillman, and Distinguished Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

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

I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. I am here to speak in **FAVOR** of:

PROPOSED HOUSE BILL NO. 5339

***AN ACT IMPOSING A MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCE FOR ASSAULT
OF PUBLIC SAFETY, EMERGENCY MEDICAL OR PUBLIC TRANSIT
PERSONNEL***

I would like to start my testimony by stating that I am a Connecticut State Trooper. I have served the state in this capacity for nearly 21 years. As Union President I represent approximately 1086 State Troopers, Sergeants and Master Sergeants.

The Connecticut State Police have the primary responsibility of ensuring that the citizens and visitors of Connecticut are safe. Every day, police officers, Connecticut State Troopers, and other public safety personnel, risk their lives serving and protecting others in our state. Often the work of our police officers largely goes unnoticed by society. Yet, the dangers of being a law enforcement officer are very real and readily apparent.

Each year law enforcement officers across the United States are killed and injured in the line of duty. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) tracks these statistics annually through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. *In 2008, the most recent year for which these statistics are available, 109 police officers were killed in the line of duty. The UCR data also indicated that 58,792 police officers were assaulted, resulting in 15,335 officers being injured. In Connecticut, an average of 714 police officers are assaulted annually.*

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to impose a mandatory minimum sentence for persons convicted of assaulting an officer. It is in this effort that we seek to increase protections for our public safety personnel so we can continue to protect and serve our communities. Being killed and assaulted in the line of duty should not be part of the job description of a police officer, and we respectfully ask for your support of this bill.

I would like to close by thanking this committee for your attention to this important issue and I am available to answer questions and provide you with any further information.

MARCH 2, 2010

CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION
Steven Rief, President