



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF**  
**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY**



**Testimony- Commissioner Peter J. Boynton**  
**Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security**

**Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee**  
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Good morning, Senator Looney, Representative Janowski and members of the Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee. It is a genuine pleasure to be here today having been nominated by Governor Rell to be the Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

I would like to first share some of my background with you.

Prior to my appointment by Governor Rell, I served for two years as the Federal Security Director for the Transportation Security Administration at Bradley International Airport. During my tenure, TSA at Bradley improved their efficiency and administration rating to the top 10 ranking among airports in the eastern United States.

Before my tenure at Bradley International Airport, I served 28 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, retiring at the rank of Captain in 2007. I began and ended my Coast Guard career in Connecticut, first at the Coast Guard Academy in New London, and then as Captain of the Port for Connecticut and Long Island in New Haven, responsible for port security, search and rescue and environmental protection.

During my Coast Guard career, I spent two years in the White House as a Director for Global Affairs on the National Security Council and three years at the Department of State coordinating national policy for drug interdiction and migrant smuggling. I also spent ten years at sea on six Coast Guard cutters. I was Commanding Officer on three cutters, based in Puerto Rico, Massachusetts and Maine. For three years in the mid 1980's, I was a member of the Vice-President's National Narcotic's Interdiction Task Force in New York City. Throughout my Coast Guard career, I worked closely with partners in local, state, and federal agencies, and with the private sector.

I am currently on the national Board of Directors for the Military Officers Association of America, and I was appointed by Governor Rell as Chair of the Connecticut Maritime Pilot Commission.

I hold a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering from the Coast Guard Academy.

## The Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS)

I would now like to briefly describe the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) and the agency's priorities going forward.

Under Title 28 of the Connecticut General Statutes, DEMHS is responsible for providing a coordinated, integrated program for both statewide emergency management and homeland security. A short list of some of the agency's many responsibilities includes: obtaining federal funding; coordinating planning, training and exercises; integrating municipal and state preparedness programs; supporting mutual aid among federal, state and local entities; administering the nuclear emergency safety program at Millstone; and coordinating homeland security information.

DEMHS collaborates and coordinates with, not just one discipline, but many. DEMHS works with, among others: the fire service, public works, emergency medical services, communications experts, law enforcement, emergency management professionals, public health, the private sector, volunteer community and social services.

In short, when the legislature and the Governor merged the functions of emergency management and homeland security in 2004 into a single agency, DEMHS, they improved the state's ability to work with all disciplines. We are now more effective and more efficient, and other states, including New York and California, are following our lead. Since DEMHS was created, the number of emergency management and homeland security federal grants received by Connecticut has gone from 3 to over 20 grants, an increase of over 500% in federal funds. For every one dollar of state general fund money spent at DEMHS, Connecticut receives between 7 and 10 federal dollars.

Part of the reason that DEMHS works so well is that our many partners view the agency as a neutral facilitator, without allegiance to any single discipline, but working with all disciplines to achieve common goals. They can look to DEMHS to help build partnerships, and break down any barriers, among disciplines. This is critical in the post 9/11 world—DEMHS continues to strengthen our ability to work together, rather than within isolated silos.

Not only is this more effective, it also costs less by avoiding wasteful duplication.

Moving forward, it is important to me that DEMHS's priorities continue to focus on this multi-discipline approach. My top three priorities for the agency are to continue to strengthen emergency management functions, as well as homeland security functions, and to continue to aggressively pursue and maintain federal grant funding for Connecticut.

In the area of emergency management, DEMHS must continue to foster the regional approach to emergency management and homeland security, begun with the establishment of five DEMHS planning regions. DEMHS has successfully worked with the state's cities and towns to bring together municipal CEOs and subject matter experts from all disciplines to plan, procure and be ready for emergencies. These regional efforts, supported and overseen by DEMHS, have saved thousands of dollars by avoiding unnecessary duplications, while assuring that first responders and their equipment are in a state of readiness to respond to disasters.

The federal government recognized this efficiency when Connecticut was awarded two Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) federal grants in the Hartford and Bridgeport areas, based completely on the geographical boundaries established as DEMHS regions. Other organizations have also found the DEMHS model to be effective, including the Connecticut Red Cross, which is now re-organized along these DEMHS regions.

Emergency management means not just preparing for the next emergency, but making ourselves more able to withstand and recover from that emergency. In that regard, DEMHS must continue to support volunteerism. Since the inception of DEMHS, over 3000 Connecticut citizens have been trained as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) team members. Other volunteer groups include Medical Reserve Corps, regional Incident Management Teams, and the Urban Search and Rescue Team. In addition, DEMHS must continue to recognize the private sector as a critical partner, both in emergency management and homeland security.

DEMHS will continue to emphasize interoperable communications, the ability of multiple disciplines to communicate with one another with equipment provided by DEMHS. Fire, police and other disciplines on-scene at an incident can now communicate on one common portable radio channel. Connecticut is one of the nation's leaders in this technology.

DEMHS must continue its regional work, not only within Connecticut, but with our neighbors as well, through such groups as the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team—a project with New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; the Northeast States Emergency Consortium; and the International Emergency Management Group, representing New England and the Eastern Provinces of Canada.

Turning to the area of homeland security, DEMHS must continue to build on the state fusion center, working with our partners, which include the FBI, municipal police from small and large communities, and other federal and state agencies. DEMHS has just completed a review of the fusion center with these partners, to identify areas where we can improve the ability to share critical information, and to work to expand the membership of the fusion center. DEMHS has also secured federal funding for a satellite fusion center facility at the DEMHS headquarters located here in the capital city of Hartford, to complement the fusion center office that is co-located with the FBI in New Haven. This capability will provide for enhanced working relationships among the partners.

In the area of planning and grants, DEMHS will work to preserve and improve federal funding levels. DEMHS' success in obtaining federal funding is not based on just chasing the funds, but rather, is based on solid and measurable planning. This is another example of the multi-disciplinary approach used by DEMHS, where all partners including local, state, tribal, federal and non-governmental organizations are included in the planning process.

DEMHS recently completed a new five-year state-wide strategy for meeting emergency management and homeland security goals. This replaced an earlier strategy, begun in 2007, that was 90% achieved. Stakeholders from the private and public sector and from all levels of government were engaged in the process of identifying state wide goals, not just goals for the agency alone. The new strategy has 10 goals, 80 objectives and 400 measurable criteria. This type of careful, collaborative and measurable planning will help us remain competitive for federal dollars.

In conclusion, ultimately, DEMHS' work is helping to make our communities become more resilient. Resiliency means that even though bad things are inevitable, when we all work together, we can withstand, respond and recover more efficiently and effectively. This can mean that: aid reaches those most in need of help; roads, schools and businesses are re-opened quickly; and the community can return to normal sooner than might otherwise be possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.