



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
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Testimony Supporting House Bill No. 5289

AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALARIES OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER AND DEPUTY
MEDICAL EXAMINER

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, Senator Debicella, Representative Giegler and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill No. 5289, An Act Concerning the Salaries of the Chief Medical Examiner and Deputy Medical Examiner.

This bill will require the Commission on Medicolegal investigations (COMLI) to submit recommendations concerning the salaries of the Chief Medical Examiner and the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) for review and approval. Under current law, COMLI is authorized to increase the salaries of both the Chief Medical Examiner and the Deputy Chief Medical Examiner without further review and approval regardless of available funding. Requiring COMLI to submit recommendations to OPM for review and approval will ensure any salary adjustments are considered as part of the budgeting process and will ensure that the agency's personal services costs remain within budgeted levels.

Aside from the Chief and Deputy Chief Medical Examiner positions, few state employee positions are exempt from OPM approval. These exceptions include professional staff in the institutions of higher education, whose salaries are set by their respective Board of Trustees, ten positions in the Agricultural Experiment Station, whose salaries are set by the Board of Control, and the Chief and Deputy Chief Investment Officers of the Office of the State Treasurer, whose salaries are set by the Treasurer, in consultation with the Investment Advisory Council. Unlike the aforementioned institutions which have funding streams in addition to the General

Fund (for example, the State Treasurer positions are both funded from the Pension/Investment Fund), funding for the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner comes entirely from the General Fund, thus making this oversight necessary to ensure expenses remain within appropriated levels. Also, existing statute requires COMLI to submit recommendations concerning salaries and compensation for other professional staff to the Department of Administrative Services, and this proposal simply provides a similar process for the Chief and Deputy Chief Medical Examiner salaries.

It is important to note, this proposed change would only make the COMLI advisory as to salary only and would not affect the COMLI's current authority over medicolegal policies and its jurisdiction over the medical examiner's term of office, qualifications, and appointment of other staff members.

I would like to again thank the committee for the opportunity to present this testimony. I respectfully request the Committee support this bill and, as always, my staff and I are available at your convenience to answer any questions you may have.