Dear Committee Members,

My name is Peter Kuck and I am a member of the Board of Firearms Permit examiners (BPFE). In the name of full disclosure I am also one of the individuals who have filed a Civil Rights suit against the Department of Public Safety.

Specific Concerns

I am in opposition to Governor's Bill No. 1017 (An act concerning the consolidation of the department of emergency management and homeland security and the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners into the Department of Public Safety, and transferring responsibility for amusement park oversight to the Department of Consumer Protection.). Last year I was outraged by the attempt to destroy the independence of the Board of Firearms Permit Examiners by removing the language [for administrative purposes only,] from Section 1.subsection(a) of section 29-32b of the General Statutes. This year I am saddened by this transparent attempt to destroy the ability of citizens to get a fair and impartial hearing from the Board by turning the control of the Board over to the very department and the individuals who have revoked or denied their permits.

The Board of Firearms Permit Examiners (BPFE) is a civilian review board with authority over the Department of Public Safety in matters relating to pistol permit denials and revocations. The Boards authority to oversee the actions of the department of Public Safety resides in sec.29-32b (b) and I quote "Any person aggrieved by any refusal to issue or renew a permit or certificate under the provisions of section 29-28 or 29-36f, or by any limitation or revocation of a permit or certificate issued under any of said sections, or by a refusal or failure of any issuing authority to furnish an application as provided in section 29-28a, may, within ninety days after receipt of notice of such refusal, limitation or revocation, or refusal or failure to supply an application as provided in section 29-28a, and without prejudice to any other course of action open to such person in law or in equity, appeal to the board. On such appeal the board shall inquire into and determine the facts, de novo, and unless it finds that such a refusal, limitation or revocation, or such refusal or failure to supply an application, as the case may be, would be for just and proper cause, it shall order such permit or certificate to be issued, renewed or restored, or the limitation removed or modified, as the case may be."

Considering that DPS has recently attempted to overturn a ruling of the Board, placing the Board under DPS control would be a conflict of interest and turn any civilian review of the Department of Public safety into a bad joke. There is no money savings here since the Board has less than a $82,000 budget to support a paid staff of 1 and 7 unpaid volunteers.

Why this Bill should be amended.

This is a repeat of the bad legislation recommended Governors Bill No. 839 [An Act Concerning Mergers and Consolidation of Various State Agencies] that was brought before you two years ago and Governors Bill No. 28 [An Act Concerning Mergers and Consolidation of Various State Agencies] brought before you last year. Both of those bills were defeated. I ask you to consider if there could ever be a good reason to remove Civilian control and oversight from the Department of Public Safety. Common sense dictates that if the Board is to be merged with any department it should be merged into the new Office of Governmental Accountability.

Thank You

Peter Kuck
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