



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Public Hearing – March 14, 2011  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Acting Commissioner Daniel C. Esty  
Department of Environment Protection

## **Raised House Bill No. 6504 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill No. 6504 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

We appreciate the Committee's willingness to raise this bill at the request of the Department of Environmental Protection (Department). This proposal that we strongly support would amend Section 1-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes to allow sworn law enforcement officers appointed under section 26-5, within the Department's Division of State Environmental Conservation Police, to administer oaths in affidavits, statements, depositions, complaints or reports made to or by any such sworn law enforcement officer.

Raised House Bill No. 6504 will eliminate the need to and cost of certifying sworn law enforcement officers within the Department as public notaries. At present the Department certifies its sworn law enforcement officers as public notaries to administer such oaths in the course of their daily functions as law enforcement officers. The Department pays a sixty-dollar recurring fee for these certifications and a cost of one hundred dollars or more to provide the officers with a notary seal and stamp. The extension of this ability to administer such oaths is in keeping with the intent of the existing law that allows sworn municipal and state police officers to do so in the performance of their regular duties of enforcing State laws and regulations and the investigations of complaints and crimes.

The Department's sworn law enforcement officers are fully certified as police officers by the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council. They have full police powers on Department properties and statewide powers of arrest under section 26-5. In addition to their responsibilities to investigate crimes and conduct investigations for the protection our natural resources, the officers investigate the same crimes and enforce the same laws on Department properties as all other police officers in their respective jurisdictions.

In summary, the Department strongly supports Raised House Bill No. 6504 because the administering of oaths is vital to the proper investigation of crimes and complaints and serves to protect the public from the lodging of false complaints and the negative effects of false statements. As the law presently stands, these fully certified police officers are not able

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administer oaths in affidavits, statements and reports. To properly perform these necessary tasks, the agency must pay for these officers to become public notaries. The passage of this bill would eliminate this unnecessary expense to the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department's views on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact the Department's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance, at (860) 424-3401 or [Robert.Lafrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.Lafrance@ct.gov).