



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE

February 10, 2011

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Senate Bill 878 - An Act Exempting From Regulation Certain Non-Profit Volunteer Ambulance Services Or Companies

The Department of Public Health opposes Senate Bill 878.

The consequence of this bill would be to allow subscription ambulance service in this state that would operate parallel to the currently licensed EMS organizations. Such service would create unnecessary and unproductive complications in the state's EMS system.

One concern with the creation of the exemption contained in this bill is its interference with the ability of the Office of Emergency Medical Services to set the rates of emergency medical services. Current state regulations do not identify subscription ambulance services as subject to the rate setting oversight of OEMS. Without those limitations, entities engaging in this type of activity would be able to provide these services at prices that could limit the access of many Connecticut residents.

EMS organizations are licensed based on geographic location and granted a monopoly over the provision of service in that area. Under that license, though, there are also mandates with respect to the services they must provide to their area. This system encourages providers to make capital investments in the EMS infrastructure in their area and allows OEMS to work with local responders to coordinate where services are being delivered and when. Additionally, in the event of a regional or statewide catastrophe, the office has the tools to work with EMS organizations to ensure that services are being provided where they are most needed.

A bifurcation of this system potentially creates a situation where citizens lack access to full EMS services. It would also require OEMS to track the resources of multiple organizations in a given area during the event of a civil emergency. Such a situation would create life-threatening delays in the decision-making process. These conditions would be unacceptable.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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