



50 Columbus Boulevard
 3rd Floor
 Hartford, CT 06106

Phone: 860-953-2626
 Fax: 860-953-1978

www.cpfu.org

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Good afternoon Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and members of the committee,

My name is William J. Boucher and I am the President of the Connecticut Police and Fire Union and I'm here today to speak in support of HB-6268, AN ACT IMPOSING A MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCE FOR ASSAULT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, EMERGENCY MEDICAL OR PUBLIC TRANSIT PERSONNEL.

The Connecticut Police & Fire Union is a union that represents approx. 900 police officers, firefighters and public safety personnel employed by the State of Connecticut. Included in this group are the Police Officers at the State Universities and DMHAS, Conservation Enforcement Officers at the DEP, the Motor Vehicle Inspectors at the DMV, Tax Enforcement Agents at the DRS, and the Firefighters and EMTs at the State Universities and Bradley Airport. I feel that the proposed amendment to the current public act will help serve as a further deterrent to would be assailants by sending a strong message that there is a severe penalty for their actions. The amendment will help protect the men and women that are working on the front lines to protect and serve the citizens of the State. These public safety professionals put themselves in harm's

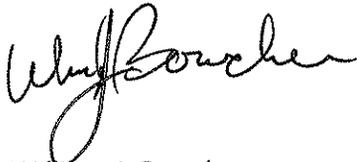
way on a daily basis while performing their duties and the proposed changes will go a long way in making their jobs safer.

However, there is one group of public safety professionals that have been left out of this legislation right from the very start; they are the Liquor Control Agents of the Liquor Control Division of the Department of Consumer Protection. During the course of their duties the Liquor Control Agents are placed in dangerous situations with little, to no, legislative protection. They are often work at night in bars in some of the worst areas of the State, dealing with drunks, drugs, gangs, gambling and other illegal activity. The Liquor Agents are working alongside members of both the State and local police departments who are covered by this Act, yet the Liquor Agents, who are exposed to the same dangers and threats, are not covered.

Having been a Liquor Control Agent prior to becoming the President of the Union; I have firsthand knowledge of the fact the Liquor Control Agents have been assaulted when brawls have occurred while they were conducting investigations in bars. Liquor Agents have also been assaulted by intoxicated patrons during the course of their duties. They have been spit on, pushed, kicked and had beer bottles thrown at them.

In summation, I feel that it is important that the Sec. 53a-167c be amended to include the Liquor Control Agents in the protected classifications, as they are on the front line enforcing the State laws and regulations with regards to the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages and often times place in dangerous situations in the performance of these duties.

If any of the members of this Committee have any questions or require any additional information regarding my testimony, I am prepared to provide you with any assistance I can.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Boucher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "W".

William J. Boucher,

President