



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

February 8, 2011

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Senate Bill 876 - An Act Concerning Emergency Medical Dispatch Training

The Department of Public Health opposes Senate Bill 876.

The Department of Public Health opposes the proposed technical language change presented in Senate Bill 876. It is understood that there are a number of Primary Service Answering Points (PSAPs) within Connecticut that upon recognition of receiving a call requesting emergency medical help, that call is quickly transferred to a center that provides "EMD" or Emergency Medical Dispatch. A component of EMS is the provision of "pre-arrival instructions." It would be critical for the PSAP call-taker to know EMD and have the ability to give pre-arrival instructions such as: how to administer CPR, how to manage a choking child, or what to do to if someone is found unconscious. This critical knowledge can be and has been life-saving in well documented cases.

Even though the PSAP transfers the medical aid calls, what will happen during times of high system demand, loss of technical ability to transfer the call or other unforeseen system complications? It is at these times that the PSAP would have to manage the medical aid call and having a call-taker with EMD Training may prove to be life saving for someone at the most critical junction between discovery of an emergency medical event and the arrival of trained on scene emergency medical care providers.

I therefore respectfully urge the committee to carefully consider the needs of the person calling for help and take action to offer the best possible outcome for the patient in need.

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

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