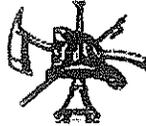


JOHN F. MCDONALD III
Chief

THE NIAN TIC FIRE DEPARTMENT

Incorporated 1923
Operators of East Lyme Ambulance

Headquarters
8 Grand St.
Niantic, CT 06357



February 19, 2011

Committee for Public Safety and Security
Governor's Bill 1016

Gentlemen:

I am writing this testimony in concern of the formation of the Department of Emergency Responder Training as depicted in the Governor's Bill 1016. The bill, as you are aware eliminates the Commission of Fire Prevention and Control which is an asset for the training of today's firefighters both professional and volunteer.

The firefighters of today must obtain certifications in all facets of firefighting. Both OSHA and the National Fire Protection Association require that firefighters be certified to their current positions. The Commission of Fire Prevention and Control sets the standards for training. They develop the certification courses and update existing courses.

Many departments throughout the State of Connecticut have Explorer or Cadet Programs. Through the help of the Commission of Fire Prevention and control we are able to train people ages 14 to 18 to become firefighters. When they turn 18, they can take their certification tests and the departments are able to utilize them on the fire ground. For many people this is the beginning of their career in the fire service. Most of the explorers become career firefighters in municipal departments. In today's society with the shortage of volunteer firefighters, and municipal budgets not able to hire professional firefighters, timing is of the essence. The Cadets or Explorers who turn 18 must be able to take their certification courses and tests quickly. This is an asset that the Commission of Fire Prevention and Control currently provides.

The formation of the Department of Emergency Responder Training puts the fire training on the back burner. The lack of training courses and the overseeing by the Commission of Fire Prevention and Control will seriously hurt the fire service and will set the fire service back in time. I urge all State Legislatures to keep the Commission of Fire Prevention and Control in place for the safety and future of the Fire Service. Help the firefighters to help the citizens of our communities which we so proudly serve.

Respectfully Submitted,

John F. McDonald III
Fire Chief