



# CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

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## Testimony to the Committee on Public Safety, February 15, 2011

Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & James Strillacci, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, we speak for the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association to testify on several Bills.

We support **SB 418, AAC Recertification of Retired Police Officers**. Even in this economy, qualified recruits are hard to find, and this bill may increase the applicant pool. Yet as a practical matter, we suspect that relatively few retired officers will be able to meet current standards.

We appreciate the intent of **SB 551, AAC Volunteer Firefighters**, but we'd ask an exemption for on-duty police personnel who are volunteers. It would be unfair to the community paying an officer to patrol its streets to lose his or her services to another town.

We strongly oppose **SB 765, An Act Concerning Emergency Alerts Concerning Abducted or Missing Children**. AMBER alerts were established to enlist public help in urgent cases—kidnapped children. They are effective because such cases are rare. But teenagers run away daily all over the state, and most return within a day. Including these runaways in AMBER alerts would be the equivalent of crying “Wolf!”—the alerts would soon be ignored. We urge you to reserve them for true emergencies.

We support **S.B. 888, An Act Exempting Certified Police Officers from Telecommunicator Training**, and urge its passage, as this would eliminate needless duplication in training and cost.

We oppose **HB 6110, AA Requiring Fines For Certain Traffic Violations in Construction Work Zones In Municipalities To Be Doubled**. We don't object to stiff fines in work zones, but there won't be many without police on site. Per 7-148, towns need to be able to regulate their roadways, including police protection at job sites if they deem it necessary. Police not only direct traffic, but give first aid and summon emergency assistance at construction mishaps, give directions to motorists, help catch fleeing criminals, and yes, issue traffic tickets. Flaggers can't.

**HB 6113 is AAC the Investigation of Missing Persons Reports**. CPCA opposes this bill as an unfunded mandate. We object in particular to additional training mandates, because it's costly to send officers for training and to replace them during their absence.

The Police Officer Standards and Training Council is responsible for determining the type and amount of training Connecticut's police need, and we should allow them to do so. Four years ago, POST developed a model policy on the acceptance of missing person reports and police response to such reports, which was disseminated to all law enforcement agencies.

This is the fifth consecutive session in which missing-person mandates have been proposed, at the prompting of a single activist. It may not be possible to satisfy every such constituent.