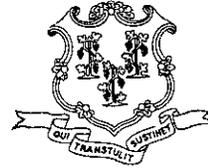


STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER
11 Shuttle Rd., Farmington, CT 06032-1939
Telephone: (860) 679-3980 Fax: (860) 679-1257



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Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Walker, Senator Kane Representative Miner and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee. I come before you today to answer any questions you may have regarding the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's projected deficiency of \$200,000 in the Other Expenses account.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is funded to carry out the critical mission of providing accurate certification of the cause of death and to identify, document and interpret relevant forensic scientific information for use in criminal and civil legal proceedings necessary in the investigation of violent, suspicious and sudden unexpected deaths, by properly trained physicians. To fulfill our statutory obligations, this Office operates on a 24 hour per day, seven day per week basis, and investigates over 50% of the deaths in Connecticut. During fiscal year 2011, this Office handled 17,839 cases.

The Connecticut General Statutes precisely defines what deaths will be investigated and stipulates the parameters and timelines. As a result of our mission, required schedule and the tight nature of an already limited budget, there is no flexibility when actions take place that are out of our control.

The \$200,000 projected deficiency in our Other Expenses account is due to an increase in costs associated with laboratory services and body transportation services. The increased cost associated with the use of outside laboratory services is directly related to the retirement of three key employees from our toxicology laboratory. Although these positions are in the process of being refilled, the agency has had no other option but to utilize the services of outside laboratories to complete the necessary tests, in order to be in compliance with our statutory obligation and provide the services needed by the public. This process is significantly more expensive than our typical practice of completing our own toxicological analysis. It is anticipated that the costs associated with the use of outside laboratory services will be reduced drastically once these positions are filled and employees have been trained. The increased cost associated with body transportation services is directly related to an increase in the number of cases processed by this Office. It is anticipated that the costs associated with body transportation services will not change until a new contract is negotiated next fiscal year.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee on the agency's projected deficiency and for your continued support of this Office. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.