

MYSTIC FIRE DISTRICT

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March, 12, 2012

Honored Members; Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee;

As President of the New London County Fire Chief's Association and representing the 62 Fire and Emergency Services Departments in New London County, I am writing to ask for your support of Senate Bill 0025 and specifically 'Section 2 (b) (2) as it pertains to "Capital construction, improvements, repairs, and land acquisition at the fire training schools.

The bonding funds noted in this bill are of the utmost importance, not only to the fire service in the State of Connecticut, but due to lack of suitable, accessible training facilities for our firefighters, to the safety of our citizens and the people that visit this great State.

The condition of the regional training facilities throughout the State of Connecticut is woeful. Although some great progress has been made, notably the recently reconstructed New Haven Fire School facility and the soon to be completed Hartford County School at the Connecticut Fire Academy much more needs to be accomplished. These funds will allow for the refurbishment and revitalization of the majority of the State's Regional Fire Schools. Many of the structures at these facilities were constructed in the 1950's with many and varied resources. The longevity of the use of the training buildings and props, in many instances, speak solely to the resourcefulness of the schools operating personnel and the fire service in general. The fire service has stretched the facilities useful life some decades passed what should have been their useable life. Some members of this committee and the legislature at large have visited one or more of the facilities and can attest to this statement.

Many fire departments have used the Eastern Connecticut Fire Training School in Willimantic for many years and have conducted a great deal of trainings there, training many firefighters from a basic Firefighter 1 class to the technical rescue classes and Fire Officer classes. The burning structures at this school have been out of service due to unsafe conditions for years now as has been many of the other regional schools burn buildings.

It should be noted that this one school is the only facility in essentially the whole eastern half of the State from the shoreline to the Massachusetts border. Presently, firefighters in training have to use either acquired structures or travel to now New Haven and previously as far as Stamford to conduct live fire training.

As President of the New London County Fire Chief's Association, I respectfully request the committee pass this bonding request favorably and allow for the Firefighters throughout our state access to viable, modern and safe regional training facilities.

I would like to also thank our Governor, Dannel P. Malloy for his support to the Fire Service in the State of Connecticut by recommending this funding to assist by providing the facilities that we so fundamentally need to continue to excellently train and serve our firefighters, both Career and Volunteer.

Respectfully,

Anthony P. Manfredi Jr.
Assistant Chief, Mystic Fire Department
President New London County Fire Chief's Association