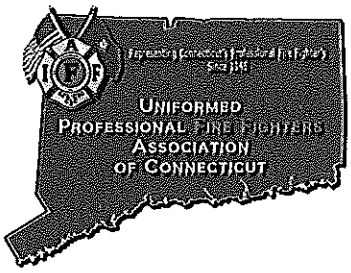
UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT
AFFILIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS
30 Sherman Street, West Hartford, CT 06110
Office: (860) 953-3200 Office Fax: (860) 953-3334

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS
Peter S. Carozza, Jr., *President*
Louis P. DeMici, *Secretary*
Robert P. Anthony, *Treasurer*



PAUL J. RAPANAULT
DIRECTOR
Legislative/Political Affairs

March 1, 2012

Labor and Public Employees Committee Public Hearing

Good afternoon Senator Prague, Representative Zalaski and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. My name is Paul Rapanault. I am the Director of Legislation/Political Affairs of the Uniformed Professional Fire Fighters of Connecticut. The UPFFA represents 5,000 career fire fighters, Emergency Medical Technicians and dispatchers in nearly 60 municipal and state local unions.

I am here today to speak on several bills before you.

H.B. No. 5201 AN ACT CONCERNING DEADLINES FOR THE COMPLETION OF MUNICIPAL BINDING ARBITRATIONS - WE ARE **OPPOSED** TO THIS BILL.

H.B. No. 5202 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ISSUING OF DECISIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION - WE ARE **OPPOSED** TO THIS BILL.

H.B. No. 5203 AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ARBITRATION AND THE APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATORS TO THE ARBITRATION PANEL - WE ARE **OPPOSED** TO THIS BILL.

Binding Arbitration works and works well for all parties. These bills offer nothing constructive to the process and should be rejected.

H.B. No. 5233 AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION FOR FIREFIGHTERS - WE **SUPPORT** THIS BILL. The need for this bill arises out of employer provided Employee Assistance Programs that do not meet the needs of individuals that have been exposed to the death of a co-worker. Most EAP programs are excellent but of very limited duration and although they may be helpful, the limited scope and duration are not always adequate for all employees. An employee who witnessed from afar the tragic death of a co-worker had a different experience than a co-worker who was standing or riding beside his/her comrade. These workers will most likely have different needs not always managed in the limited EAP programs provided by employers. This bill would provide additional resources through Worker's Compensation and we ask your support of this important legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Paul J Rapanault, Legislative/Political Affairs

Walter M. O'Connor, *President Emeritus*
Santo J. Alleano, Jr., *Vice President Emeritus*
Raymond D. Shea, *President Emeritus*
Patrick J. Shevlin, *Treasurer Emeritus*