

**Testimony for the
Higher Education & Workforce Advancement Committee
from
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Good afternoon. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to the proposed legislative bill, **HB 6655, An Act Concerning Campus Safety and Security** regarding security protocol planning. I believe that much of what is being proposed is already largely in place. Each higher education institution was required to develop threat assessment teams on their campuses in 2009. On our campus, we call this team the Community Assessment Team. I believe the teams that are situated at the campuses are multidisciplinary, and are functioning well.

While I believe the proposed legislative bill is honorable in its intention, there is some wording in the bill that causes me concern. More specifically:

1. On section (b) line 3 it states in part “include not less than one member of its special police force or campus security personnel, administration, faculty, senior and mid-level staff, and student government. “ This language does not allow institutions to comprise their own multi-disciplinary teams as they fit within their organization. I would recommend “each constituent unit and independent institution of higher education shall comprise a threat assessment team in such a manner as to see that the representation on that team will include individuals that will most likely give that institution the best perspective in identifying possible threats, problems, or service needs. On our team, we have detailed discussions about students, staff, and faculty who are exhibiting signs of distress. Including Student Government representatives on this team could cause a breach of confidential information.
2. In section (b) (2) it states “receives comprehensive training in identifying potentially at-risk students, other potentially at-risk individuals on campus and any other potential threats to campus safety. “Comprehensive training” is a loaded and ambiguous standard to place into a bill. A better option in my opinion would be: Shall be able to identify potentially at-risk students, other potentially at-risk individuals on campus, and any other potential threats to campus safety

I would also like to mention what our independent colleges and universities are doing in terms of emergency management in DEMHS region 3. We signed a memorandum of agreement in 2007 that included CREPC, Wesleyan University, Trinity College, Goodwin College, University of Hartford and the University of Saint Joseph. We joined together to develop a resilient all-hazards approach to emergency

management. CREPC has designated our group as Regional Support Function 21. I have the honor of chairing that regional support function.

In June of 2012 we updated our memorandum to include Lincoln Technical Institute. We are now actively developing regional emergency support functions at our institutions. We have our facilities, residential life, health services, public safety, information technology and food services groups developing a regional plan to support any of our institutions in need. The RESF-21 group is also working closely with the region to assist the larger community in a time of need.

I have the honor of working on the executive team of the CTIMT 3 response team. We have deployed to assist in many emergencies in the past few years. We responded to the Kleen Energy explosion and factory fires, and provided funeral support for fire fighters. Most recently our planning section deployed to Sandy Hook to assist with coordination. I serve as the Public Information Officer on that team.

Our RESF-21 group believes that planning beyond our individual silos is essential to true risk mitigation.

Thank you again for this opportunity to speak to you today.