



Connecticut EMS Advisory Board

John Quinlavin, Chairman

Testimony of Connecticut EMS Advisory Board

2013 HB 6518, An Act Concerning Emergency Medical Services

As the Chairman of the legislatively created Connecticut EMS Advisory Board charged with advising the legislature on matters related to EMS, I appreciate this opportunity to voice the strong opposition of the Board to HB 6518. As you know, the Board consists of 41 members providing the opportunity for all stakeholders in the EMS system to provide guidance, direction, and collaboration on EMS related matters.

Although this bill seems to respond to some concerns worthy of exploration, it is more likely to meet the parochial needs of a few communities at the expense of a mature, well organized and structured statewide EMS system. Without appropriate due diligence this bill has the potential to put our entire system into a state of chaos, create unpreparedness for statewide emergencies, and negatively impact the care provided to your constituents.

Specifically, this bill:

- Eliminates the regional planning and efficiency benefits to our EMS providers from maintaining regional EMS councils.
- Eliminates the Advisory Board which has been responsible for researching, developing, vetting, promoting and facilitating implementation of most, if not all, of the advances in patient care in CT in the last five years. With now an extremely collaborative relationship with the Department of Health, many more system and clinical advances are under development. I ask that you confer with our DPH colleagues as to the value the Department places upon maintaining the EMS Advisory Board.
- Eliminates the CT EMS Medical Advisory Committee, the state leading authority on very complex clinical treatment issues and paradigms. This will significantly slow or stall advances in patient care.
- The bill as worded seems to suggest that the elimination of the above entities is a means to accomplish the remaining items in the bill by removing a deliberate, thoughtful, transparent process to address some of the concerns raised.
- Fails to recognize the existence of a mechanism already in place for municipal influence over their EMS provider assignment. Not one municipality has even attempted to exhaust this remedy in 13 years. There is no evidence that the existing system would not work, especially if municipalities met their responsibility for completing the every five year EMS planning process or established written agreements with their providers.

We are grateful to the proponents of this bill for bringing to the forefront issues of interest to them and propose this bill not be raised out of committee and instead we proceed with a planned review of our EMS system by the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration and move forward in a measured way.

We acknowledge there may be opportunities for further improving our Connecticut EMS system and are excited to carefully explore them for your consideration.

Thank you.