



CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, Senator Kissell, Representative Rebimbas, and other distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Andrew Matthews, and I am President of the Connecticut State Police Union. We are here today to speak in **OPPOSITION** of:

RAISED BILL NO. 461 "AN ACT CONCERNING DUTIES OF DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION OFFICIALS AS PEACE OFFICERS AND PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO SERVE AS ARMED SECURITY GUARDS IN SCHOOLS."

The State Police Union is submitting this written testimony in opposition of Raised Bill 461, because this bill would change Subdivision (9) of section 53a-3 of the general statutes in part from its current language defining a Peace Officer as "an official of the Department of Correction authorized by the Commissioner of Correction to make arrests (in a correctional institution or facility) while in the performance of the official's duties."

This change would have a direct impact on section 54-1f of the general statutes which states in part, "Peace Officers, as defined in subdivision (9) of section 53a-3, in their respective precincts, shall arrest, without previous complaint and warrant, any person *for any offense* in their jurisdiction." One could argue that authorized corrections officers would now be allowed to make criminal arrests anywhere in the State of Connecticut while in the performance of their official duties without having received the proper training and police certification as required by state law. Any unintentional mistake or abuse could result in potential liability claims being made against the State of Connecticut. While this proposal may appear to sound fair on its face, it may expand itself outside of the legislative intent.

Also, we are in opposition to the proposed amendment to Section 10-244a(c)(2), which allows for retired federal law enforcement agents and law enforcement officers from other states to serve as armed security guards within public schools. We are opposed to this amendment because it diminishes the role of certified police officers assigned to educate and protect the students in our schools and it could create liability for the State of Connecticut.

Connecticut General Statute 7-294(x) states, in part, "The Police Officer Standards and Training Council...shall provide training to security personnel employed in the public schools by a local or regional board of education. Such training shall include drug detection and gang identification." Also, Section 10-244a(b) requires that retired police officers successfully complete annual firearms training. By setting and providing minimum standards of training, it is possible the state could be exposed to civil liability. The proposed statute would also allow a police officer who retired ten to twenty years ago to qualify for an armed security guard position. Some of the annual training currently offered to certified officers, including but not limited to, active shooter training, was not offered to many of our retired police officers. Security Guards should be used to supplement, not substitute for experienced and well trained certified officers.

March 24, 2014

Andrew Matthews, Esq.
President, Connecticut State Police Union