



CCM 2014 Testimony

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JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

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The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

SB 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 bill would, among other things, allow former federal law enforcement agents, or select law enforcement from other states, to serve as armed security guards in schools.

CCM **supports** the provisions of SB 461 that would allow local officials the option to provide an additional valuable resource in protecting our children. The tragic events that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary School present a stark reminder of how vulnerable our children's safety can be. Education is paramount for our children's success, and local officials realize they have a duty to protect our students from violence while in school.

In many schools, School Resource Officers (SROs) are utilized to prevent violence and ensure safety within our schools. These are sworn law enforcement officers that have undergone basic police training as well as advanced training to serve as SROs. The cost to assign an SRO to a school however can be burdensome due to the cost of training and assigning these officers and taking them off routine patrols. Therefore, many schools throughout the state utilize non-SRO officials.

This proposal would expand the list of eligible list of individuals able to serve as armed guards. In doing so, this proposal includes safe guards to ensure only qualified individuals to serve in these roles. These would include requiring that these officials to have been retired with good standing and have obtained particular qualifications.

For these reasons, CCM asks the Committee to **favorably report** SB 461.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, Senior Legislative Associate, at mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org or (203) 500-7556.

