

INCORPORATED 1645

THE TOWN OF FARMINGTON



Planning and Development Committee
Testimony RE: HB5580
March 20, 2014

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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony regarding HB 5580, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PRIMARY SERVICE AREA TASK FORCE AND THE ELIMINATION OF A MUNICIPAL MANDATE.

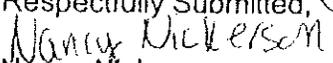
I serve as the Chair of the Farmington Town Council. Emergency Medical Services at the First Responder level are provided by the Town of Farmington Fire Department (TFFD), which is a combination department staffed by 175 volunteer fire fighters and 8 career fire fighters. Last year, TFFD answered almost 3,500 calls for service. Ambulance Transport Service is provided by AMR and Paramedic level service is provided by the UCONN Health Center Fire Department in my community.

I offer testimony today asking that you support HB5580 specifically because it includes all 5 of the recommendations that are included in EMS PSA Task Force Final Report. The most important of these recommendations is Recommendation #5, the Alternative Provision of PSA Responsibilities. This recommendation simply states that municipalities shall have the right to submit a Local EMS Plan for consideration to DPH for the alternative provision of primary service area responder responsibilities.

Recommendation #5 does not offer any guarantees of a change of EMS provider, it simply offers a municipality, which believes that their community can better served by a different EMS provider, the opportunity to have their specific case heard by DPH.

The current PSA System has no notion of competitiveness factored into the market for emergency medical calls. Municipalities may contract with only the provider assigned to them to obtain better performance or higher level of service. Due to the methods of PSA assignment, this service cannot be bid on the open market. This is essentially a monopoly. Municipalities routinely go out to bid for proposals to determine the best way to provide a variety of services as a matter of best practices. EMS should be no exception.

It should be the role of the municipality to select their EMS provider. It should be the role of DPH to ensure that Local EMS Plans comply with the law and those EMS providers meet the required criterion. Home rule is a fundamental aspect of the laws and traditions of every New England state. I urge your support for HB5580 because it includes all 5 Recommendations of the EMS PSA Task Force.

Respectfully Submitted, 

Nancy Nickerson
Chair, Farmington Town Council

