



# Old Mystic Fire Department

## Reliance Fire Company No.1

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March 18, 2014

Public Health Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
300 Capital Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

**RE: Senate Bill #439**

Dear Committee Members,

As a 37-year veteran of the fire service and having served as the Fire Chief for over 20 years, I have major concerns about Senate Bill #439 as it is written. I am a strong advocate for providing good patient care. The core mission of today's emergency service organizations is to work as a team and provide the best possible care we can to the person in need, no matter what. I have been an Emergency Medical Technician for 34 years, responding to emergencies and providing care to people in need (yes, as Chief, I still do hands-on patient care). I find it totally unacceptable to pass a bill that will affect every emergency service organization in the state, simply because of a very small percentage of organizations that can't work as a team on the scene of an emergency. We need to address why these organizations have issues on-scene and make corrections, rather than passing a bill that will affect the vast majority of organizations that work well together. As the Past President of the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association and the current Connecticut Director of the New England Division International Fire Chiefs Association, I am willing to sit down with the small number of organizations that can't work as a team, to examine the root causes of the problem, and help with corrective actions.

I am going on record in opposition to Senate Bill #439. I ask that the entire committee request a meeting with the very small percent of organizations having a problem and work to correct it at the local level rather than creating an unnecessary bill that will impact the entire state. My job is the same as yours - at the end of the day, I must do what is right for the people we have been sworn to serve. This bill is not the right thing to do for better patient care.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth W. Richards, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Kenneth W. Richards, Jr.  
Fire Chief / Fire Marshal