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Testimony before the Public Safety and Security Committee
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Raised House Bill 5150 An Act Concerning Fire Safety Enforcement Officials

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is Keith Flood, I am the Fire Marshal for the First Fire Taxation District in West Haven and I represent the Connecticut Fire Marshals Association. I am here today to speak on HB 5150.

The Connecticut Fire Marshals Association has authored the raised bill before you which is a change to CGS 29-298, Certification of local fire marshals, deputies, inspectors and investigators. The concern of the constituents that I represent is that the Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal or Fire Inspector certification process should be comparable to the process by which building officials are certified. The Bill before you provides professionalism to the career by instituting prerequisites in order to participate in the precertification training for Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal, and Fire Inspector. The prerequisites the CFMA is recommending for the position of Fire Marshal, Deputy Fire Marshal and Fire Inspector are as follows: at least three years experience (1) in fire suppression or fire prevention activities, (2) in responding and controlling releases or potential releases of hazardous materials, (3) in inspection activities concerning the fire safety or prevention code or hazardous materials, (4) in the investigation of the cause and origin of fires and explosions, or (5) as a sworn member of the Division of State Police within the Department of Emergency Services and Public protection or an organized local police department. The adoption of such prerequisites shall bring parity between the building officials and the Fire Marshal community. The adoption of the bill would reduce the amount of tracking that OEDM would have to accomplish. As it is right now OEDM tracks officials who are eligible to be certified, certified and uncertified. The bill would enable OEDM to only have to track certified and noncertified officials.

The Connecticut Fire Marshals Association would also recommend a change to the certification authority from the Codes and Standards Committee to the Fire Marshal Training Council. This change is also identified in the Bill before you. This change would enable the Fire Marshal Training Council along with the State Fire Marshal the authority to establish training guidelines for the precertification program.