



CONNECTICUT STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC. Education Committee

Burrville Regional Fire School
Eastern Connecticut Fire School
Fairfield Regional Fire School

Hartford County Regional Fire School
Middlesex County Fire School
New Haven Regional Fire Academy

Stamford Regional Fire School
Valley Fire Chiefs' Regional Fire School
Wolcott State Regional Fire School

February 25, 2015

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing re: Governor's Proposed FY 2016-2017 Biennial Budget

Connecticut's Regional Fire Schools have been delivering training to fire departments in Connecticut since as early as the 1940's. The regional concept was adopted by fire schools, independently, through the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's. These schools are administered through various regional fire service organizations and are designed to be responsive to the needs of each region.

In 1972 the Connecticut House and Senate advanced a Special Legislative Act which was designed to provide grants in aid to the state's Regional Fire Schools. Governor Meskill (R) subsequently signed that bill into law.

During the period following this bill's passage, and until the Malloy administration, governors Grasso (D), O'Neill (D), Weicker (ACP), Rowland (R), and Rell (R), all supported this initiative and indeed, funding levels have been increased several times. This Grant Funding has proved critical in order to provide for our mission to train firefighters.

The state grant funding sustains the operational costs of the regional fire schools. Instructors' payroll, utility costs and basic required maintenance activity is paid for with this funding. Without this funding, a significant overhead exists that will preclude the current functionality of these facilities. Most, if not all of these schools will probably be forced to shut down. There will certainly be no ability to allow these facilities to be utilized by other agencies, such as the Office of Education and Data Management (Training for Local Fire Marshals and Building Officials), as they are now, without significant fees.

The proposal by Governor Malloy's administration to eliminate this funding will have an incalculable impact on training of our Firefighters and other first responders. In order to transfer all regional fire school operating costs to user fees, the resulting cost of a Firefighter I program will increase between 300 and 400 percent. This resulting cost increase, without preparation or warning, will result in municipal fire departments needing to pay a regional fire school fees for a Firefighter I training, now between \$600 and \$700, will cost between \$2,000 and \$2,700 per recruit candidate for this same training. There are only two funding sources currently available, the grants in aid and the per student tuition. Regional fire schools are left no alternative. Each municipal fire department will need to decide whether to pay the student fees and support their regional fire school or to shop for a lower cost for training programs. Several issues may surface based upon these pending decisions.

They are: Regional fire schools provide for significant liability insurance in order to protect students, instructors, and the user groups in the event of an injury. Regional fire schools provide Workers Compensation Insurance for instructors, consistent with requirements of the Connecticut Department of Labor. Regional fire schools provide for earnings withholdings for employees (instructors) consistent with requirements of the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services and the Internal Revenue Service. There is also a long standing commitment by these schools to provide for a quality, safe program. Each Regional Fire School solicits trained and experienced instructors for delivery of their programs.

Alternate vendors willing to provide fire service training may not provide for appropriate liability insurance, workers compensation insurance, and state and federal payroll withholdings. Quality control for these program deliveries could result in performance and safety issues. There is no system in place currently to evaluate a program delivery as acceptable. Each fire department will be on their own to select a vendor for future deliveries. Conformance with acceptable safety and performance standards will be left to market forces.

Another negative impact of the proposed de-funding of the operational budgets for the regional fire schools is the number of dedicated, seasoned instructional staff that will potentially lose this employment. The aggregate number of instructors currently on the payroll for these nine regional fire schools is nearly 300. Certification staff at the Connecticut Fire Academy will also be negatively impacted by the loss of the resulting certification testing.

Since the 2001 legislative session countless hours have been committed to planning and implementing the rebuilding of the state's regional fire schools. The New Haven Regional Fire Academy has been renovated with a new burn building, storage building, training props and rehabilitation structure built. Extensive renovations were also accomplished at the existing classroom and administration building at that site. The Hartford County Regional Fire School has been renovated with a new burn building, storage/classroom building, and training props constructed. Property has been purchased for a new fire school for the Valley Fire Chiefs' in Beacon Falls. Property has also been purchased for the Eastern Connecticut Fire School in Willimantic. Excess property has been transferred from the Connecticut Department of Corrections to the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control for a new fire school for the Waterbury Area Fire Chiefs in Cheshire. A long term lease has been negotiated for the Torrington Fire School in Burrville. This work has called for the expenditure of over \$14 million of State Bond Funding. An additional \$56 million has been authorized, but not yet released for the long term capitol plan for the regional fire schools. How does any of this expenditure of countless hours of work and state funding make any sense when the intent of the current state administration is to de-fund all training at the regional fire schools.

Let no one forget that the state of Connecticut is currently served by nearly 30,000 firefighters. Of these, over 70% are volunteers. These volunteer firefighters save taxpayers across this state in excess of \$100 million each year over the cost to replace these responders with full time career firefighters. While we realize that TOUGH CHOICES have to be made during this period of a looming budget crisis. However, to make a cut that is .00176% (\$706,704) of a \$40 billion dollar budget that will directly impact a core public safety service that is depended upon daily for emergency public protection is indefensible and must be reversed.

It appears perfectly clear that allowing fire departments to put on new recruit firefighters without providing the proper training is both fool hearty, and in clear violation of regulations promulgated by the Connecticut Department of Labor.

Since the 2001 legislative session members of this committee have been working with members of the general assembly, both House and Senate, and staff of the Executive Branch of this administration to realize the plan and vision for fire service training. Every budget cycle we are, again, being asked to justify the need for training firefighters in Connecticut. I would sincerely wish to point out that these efforts are duplicative and counterproductive.

Sincerely,



Alan R. Hawkins, chairman

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

<http://www.ct.gov/despp>

AGENCY PURPOSE

- To provide a coordinated, integrated program for the protection of life and property and for state-wide emergency management.
- To protect and improve the quality of life for all by providing a broad range of public safety and scientific services, training, regulatory guidance through enforcement, prevention, education, and innovative use of technology.
- To protect the life and property of all persons in Connecticut in the event of a disaster or crisis, whether natural or manmade, by maximizing all available resources through a collaborative and coordinated program of prevention, planning, preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and public education and featuring strategic planning, operations, training and exercise, grants, and disaster relief.
- To provide primary law enforcement services for all municipalities that do not have their own chartered police department.
- To provide additional special police resources to all municipalities on request.
- To promote traffic safety statewide through education, enforcement, and investigation.
- To support the Criminal Justice System through the forensic analysis of evidentiary materials.
- To reduce death, injury and property damage due to fire, emergencies and other disasters by increasing the proficiency of fire service personnel through training, education and recognition of professional competency through certification.
- To assist in fire service mutual aid coordination through the Statewide Fire Rescue Disaster Response Plan.
- To certify all police officers, law enforcement instructors and police training programs throughout the state of Connecticut.
- To develop a master plan for emergency telecommunications within the State of Connecticut. To coordinate with area states and the Federal Communications Commission and act as a liaison with the public safety community to ensure that its needs are addressed.
- To coordinate public safety broadband and interoperable communication programs with state, local and federal response organizations.
- To advocate for and support crime victims and survivors.

RECOMMENDED SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

<i>Reductions</i>	<u>2015-2016</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>
• Remove or Limit Inflation	-960,142	-1,901,227
• Eliminate Funding for Fire Training Schools	-706,704	-706,704
• Combine Agency Headquarters Message Center and Bradley International Airport Dispatch	-277,623	-285,952
• Reduce Property Management Services	-150,400	-150,400
• Reduce Personal Services	-79,418	-79,418
• Annualize FY 2015 Rescissions	-37,196	-37,196
<i>Revenue</i>	<u>2015-2016</u>	<u>2016-2017</u>
• Charge Municipalities for Full Cost of Resident State Trooper Program	4,600,000	4,600,000

Municipalities participating in the Resident State Trooper program will be required to pay 100% of the total costs for state trooper services as opposed to 70%.

AGENCY SUMMARY

<i>Personnel Summary</i>	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2017
	Total Authorized	Change From FY 2015	Total Recommended	Change From FY 2016	Total Recommended
<i>Permanent Full-Time Positions</i>					
General Fund	1,733	4	1,737	0	1,737
Federal Funds	29	0	29	0	29
Private Funds	28	0	28	0	28
<i>Other Positions Equated to Fulltime</i>					
Federal Funds	2	0	2	0	2

Budget Summary

<i>Financial Summary</i>	FY 2016	FY 2016	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2017
	Estimated	Current Services	Total Recommended	Current Services	Total Recommended
General Fund					
Personal Services	135,480,217	150,036,769	149,692,228	150,352,807	149,999,937
Other Expenses	27,532,034	30,013,534	29,103,216	31,336,624	29,720,532
<u>Capital Outlay</u>					
Equipment	93,990	93,990	93,990	93,990	93,990
TOTAL - Capital Outlay	93,990	93,990	93,990	93,990	93,990
<u>Other Current Expenses</u>					
Stress Reduction	25,354	25,354	25,354	25,354	25,354
Fleet Purchase	6,877,690	6,877,690	6,877,690	7,572,005	7,572,005
Gun Law Enforcement Task Force	0	0	0	0	0
Workers' Compensation Claims	4,238,787	4,861,941	4,638,787	5,099,502	4,638,787
TOTAL - Other Current Expenses	11,141,831	11,764,985	11,541,831	12,696,861	12,236,146
<u>Pmts to Other than Local Govts</u>					
Fire Training School - Willimantic	153,709	153,709	0	153,709	0
Maintenance of County Base Fire Radio Network	23,918	23,918	23,918	23,918	23,918
Maintenance of State-Wide Fire Radio Network	15,919	15,919	15,919	15,919	15,919
Police Association of Connecticut	190,000	190,000	190,000	190,000	190,000
Connecticut State Firefighter's Association	194,711	194,711	194,711	194,711	194,711
Fire Training School - Torrington	77,299	77,299	0	77,299	0
Fire Training School - New Haven	45,946	45,946	0	45,946	0
Fire Training School - Derby	35,283	35,283	0	35,283	0
Fire Training School - Wolcott	95,154	95,154	0	95,154	0
Fire Training School - Fairfield	66,876	66,876	0	66,876	0
Fire Training School - Hartford	160,870	160,870	0	160,870	0
Fire Training School - Middletown	56,101	56,101	0	56,101	0
Fire Training School - Stamford	62,661	62,661	0	62,661	0
TOTAL - Pmts to Other than Local Govts	1,168,447	1,168,447	424,548	1,168,447	424,548
<u>Nonfunctional - Change to Accruals</u>					
	59,181	59,181	0	59,181	0
TOTAL - General Fund	175,475,700	193,136,906	190,855,813	195,707,910	192,475,153
TOTAL - All Funds Net	175,475,700	193,136,906	190,855,813	195,707,910	192,475,153

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

Education Committee

State Bond Funding Authorized

Amount	Description	Leg. Session
200,000	fundng for facility study	2001
10,000,000	First allotment of bond funding approved for fire schools rebuild	2004
10,000,000	Second allotment of bond funding approval for fire schools rebuild	2006
8,000,000	Third allotment of bond funding approved for fire schools rebuild	2007
-2,000,000	Public Act #10-44 removed \$2 million from Regional fire School bonding allocation proposal from P.O. 07-7 Sect. 2	2010
2,000,000	Reinstated by general assembly	2011
26,200,000	Proposed by Malloy 02/08/12	2012
15,777,672	Senate Bill #29 - 2014 legislative session	2014
70,177,672	Total Authorized	

State Bond Funding Released by the State Bond Commission

200,000	Not more than \$200,000 shall be used to conduct a study of the facilities at the regional fire training schools.	01/27/06
422,660	These funds are requested to finance the design of improvements to the Hartford County Regional Fire School at the Connecticut Fire Academy in Windsor Locks. This project consists of the expansion of the Maintenance and Burn Building facilities. The Maintenance Building expansion will be a pre-engineered building of approximately 7,600 square feet. The Class A Burn Building will be a concrete building of approximately 4,300 square feet. The project also includes related site work and utilities improvements.	01/25/08
150,000	These funds are requested to finance the selection of a consultant to develop a Design Build program (request for proposals) for new fire training schools in Fairfield and in the Burrville section of Torrington	08/04/08
367,912	These funds are requested to finance the design of renovations and additions to the New Haven Regional Fire School. This project consists of a new burn building, vehicle/equipment storage garage and various training props and site improvements. Renovations to the existing administration building include HVAC, fire alarm and ADA improvements.	03/31/09
4,100,000	These funds are requested to award a construction contract based on bids received May 29, 2009 for renovations and additions to the New Haven Regional Fire School. This project consists of a new burn building, vehicle/equipment storage garage and various training props and site improvements. Renovations to the existing administration building include HVAC, fire alarm and ADA improvements.	10/30/09
500,000	These funds are requested to finance the purchase of property and associated acquisition costs for the Eastern Connecticut Regional Fire School in Willimantic in accordance with the master plan.	07/13/10
950,000	These funds are requested to finance the purchase of property and associated acquisition costs for the relocation of the Valley Regional Fire School in Beacon Falls in accordance with the master plan.	07/13/10
250,000	These funds are requested to provide additional resources for the development of a Design Build program (RFP) for new fire training schools in Fairfield and Burrville (Torrington)	07/13/10
4,937,100	These funds are requested to award a construction contract based on bids received on October, 13, 2010 for the construction of a Maintenance and Burn Building for the Connecticut Fire Academy Hartford County Fire School.	02/24/11
800,000	These funds are requested to provide additional funds for design/build architectural services for the Fire Training School construction projects at the Burrville (Torrington), Fairfield, Willimantic, Beacon Falls and Cheshire fire schools.	04/27/12
1,500,000	These funds are requested to provide design and soil hazardous material removal services on Fire Training School construction projects for Burrville (Torrington), Fairfield, Willimantic, Beacon Falls, and Cheshire Fire Schools.	01/09/14
14,177,672	Total Allocated	
56,000,000	Authorized - Not released	

Connecticut State Firefighters Association
Education Committee
2015

Connecticut State Firefighters Association

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Connecticut State Firefighters Association Education Committee

Mission Statement

The Education Committee of the Connecticut State Firefighter's Association is made up of representatives from the Regional Fire Schools, The Connecticut State Firefighters Association, the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control and the Connecticut Fire Academy and is organized in a collaborative effort to support the firefighters in the State of Connecticut by:

- **Promoting the regional fire schools as a means of providing fire fighter and fire officer training at the local level;**
- **Supporting the efforts of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control to provide quality training through the Connecticut Fire Academy;**
- **Developing and promoting short and long range plans for capitol improvements to the State's regional fire schools;**
- **Developing recommendations for standardizing the delivery of fire fighter and fire officer certification training at the state's regional fire schools;**
- **Coordinating training initiatives between the regional fire schools and the Connecticut Fire Academy;**
- **Providing a forum for the exchange of ideas relating to fire fighter training in the State.**

