

Testimony of Damian M. Rickard, Emergency Management Director  
American Ambulance Service, Inc.

Public Safety and Security Committee

Monday, March 2, 2015

Senator Larson, Representative Dargan and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee.

My name is Damian Rickard and my testimony today is in opposition of:

***1. Raised Bill No. 1010, An Act Concerning Supplemental First Responder Licenses.***

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system must be an integrated system in order to provide the best possible care for the residents of the State of Connecticut.

In the raised bill, the ability for any EMS organization to apply for a supplemental first responder license, unopposed, would undermine this integration of the existing system.

For a current emergency services organization to provide new and expanded services there is a formal need for service process that must be followed to ensure financial stability, oversight, and need for the new or expanded service. With the raised bill, these would not be a requirement for a supplemental first responder.

If passed, this bill would allow any service to apply to be a supplemental first responder in any municipality. There is no mention of requiring a plan for integration of this new supplemental first responder into the existing system prior to granting the license.

With the passage of Public Act 14-217 last year, municipalities were given even greater control over the provision of Emergency Medical Services in their communities. The raised bill would undermine the intent of PA 14-217 by specifically excluding the support or approval of the municipal CEO where the service is to be provided.

The very organizations that *should* have influence into the provision of Emergency Medical Services in a community are explicitly *excluded* from the process of licensing a new supplemental first responder in the raised bill.

Finally, the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health issues Primary Service Area Responder (PSAR) designations to EMS organizations for specific geographic regions and at various levels of service including the First Responder Level. (See 19a-177(11); 19a-179-4) A designated Primary Service Area Responder is afforded first call priority. With the introduction of Supplemental First Responders as proposed by the raised bill, the rights and obligations of the existing First Responder PSAR are at significant risk of being infringed.

In conclusion, there is an existing process in CT for additional providers being introduced into the system, and it is the intent of the existing system to ensure there is a coordinated, integrated response to the needs of the citizens of Connecticut. The raised bill undermines this process and the entire Emergency Medical Services system by not requiring notification, support or approval of the existing system stake holders – including the municipality - before introducing a new provider into the system.

Please reflect on my testimony, specifically the patient, before casting your vote. It has been my intention to sway you to vote in opposition of Raised Bill No. 1010.

Respectfully submitted,

Damian M. Rickard