

Northeastern Pulmonary Associates, PLLC

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February 22, 2015

To,
The Labor and Public Employees Committee
Legislative office Building, Room 3800
Hartford, CT 06106

RE:
General Assembly Committee Bill No 439
January Session 2015,
LCO No 03184SB00439LAB

I am currently serving as the Mayor of the Town of South Windsor. I am fortunate also to be serving in the State Emergency Response Commission.

I am writing to request your full support and consideration of accepting the committee Bill No 439 cosponsored by Senator Osten 19th district and Representative Fritz from the 19th district SB439.

Within our State Emergency Response Commission, we do look at the critical value of the Department of Environmental Protection and the managers and directors who oversee emergency response and spill prevention within the division of Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. As we look at our state's capacity to be better prepared for any type of hazardous material exposures, I do strongly feel that there needs to be a strong succession program and a capacity building effort for managers and directors to secure the state's future capacity for hazardous spills.

I strongly believe that this position entail critical skills and does place these employees in situation of considerable risk and it is appropriate to offer them the benefit as recommended in this bill. I do feel those managers that have direct oversight of emergency operations of the DEEP emergency response unit and the individuals who have direct oversight of emergency response in field operation and incidents sites should be included in this bill. In the absence of such action we have a serious succession problem within the DEEP emergency response unit.

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As of right now there is are two main dis-incentives for anyone to take these positions. While we have excellent qualified staff within the emergency response unit, they are not interested to apply for the supervisory or managerial positions because they will lose their ability to receive appropriate and fair credit for additional hours under the current policies. This has an impact on their retirement, if they ever consider the managerial position within the agency. As a result of the above our state is losing our best and most qualified individuals as time goes by.

I am sure you would agree with me that our human capital is one of our greatest assets. Experience and knowledge in situations of disasters and hazardous spills can be the difference between life and death. In order to protect our future as a State and those of the community we serve I urge you to please support SB439, "An act concerning hazardous duty retirement for certain employees at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection."

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



M. Saud Anwar, MD., MPH
Mayor Town of South Windsor
Member State Emergency Response Commission
Specialist, Pulmonary and Critical Care and Occupational Environmental
Medicine

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