

Testimony by Deputy Police Chief Jack Reed in Support of  
SB No. 258: An Act Concerning Infant Safe Sleep Practices

Distinguished Members of the Committee on Public Health,

My name is Deputy Police Chief Jack Reed. I have been a Police Officer in Willimantic for 30 years. I have investigated child deaths as a Patrol Officer and as a Detective. I have supervised child death investigations as a Detective Division Commander. I have been a member of the Child Fatality Review Panel for approximately one year.

I support the passage of SB No. 258, an Act Concerning Safe Sleep. As a Police Officer, I have seen and investigated many death investigations. Many of the deaths are truly horrible. After years of Police work, I suppose I have become "desensitized" to death. But, you never, ever, forget the death of children! I remember those like they happened yesterday. About 20 years ago, I investigated a death of a one or two month old child. The baby was smothered by her mother while co-sleeping in a single size bed. I can still remember the impression of the blue cross-checked knit receiving blanket on the baby's face. Seeing this is truly heartbreaking. The mother was living at a family shelter at the time. There was a bassinet in the room. Had anyone told her that it was unsafe to co-sleep with the baby? This death could have been prevented.

I remember other cases. Lots and lots of toys and stuffed animals in the child's bed. Lots of pretty blankets in the bed. Bumpers in the beds so that the babies won't hit their head. Wonderful parents now devastated at the loss of their beautiful child. Had anyone told them that it was unsafe to have toys blankets and bumpers in the child's bed? Preventable deaths. I believe we should educate mothers on safe sleep practices at the Hospital level. (Hopefully those with pediatricians would have started the education.)

For the reasons above, I support the passage of SB No. 258.

Respectively submitted,

Jack Reed

Deputy Police Chief

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