

UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

AFFILIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

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Good afternoon, Honorable Chairs Rep. Walker and Sen. Bye, members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Richard Hart. I represent the Uniformed Professional Firefighters Association of Connecticut which represents 57 Local affiliates of the International Association of Firefighters. Membership in the UPFFA is comprised of approximately 4,000 Union firefighters in Connecticut.

I am speaking today respectfully requesting that the Appropriations Committee restore the operating budgets of the 9 Region Fire Schools in the amount of \$460,000. These schools are vital to the continuing principle the state has embraced and that is the regionalization of Fire Department resources and training. I fully understand and am sympathetic to the position you have been placed in by this budget. Unfortunately though, the continued training of our fire service personnel should remain at the forefront of the overarching principle of homeland security. In the City of Waterbury alone, a recruit class of 14 was trained at the Wolcott Regional Fire School from October 1, 2014-December 19, 2014. Costs to the City were \$61,913.34, whereas the cost to send the recruits to the State Fire Academy in Windsor Locks would have been \$85,050, a savings of \$23,136.66, or 27.2% less. The ancillary effect of running our own training academy is the Waterbury Fire Department Instructors trained the Waterbury Fire Department recruits not only to NFPA 1001, Professional Firefighter Qualifications, EMR, and OSHA 1910.120 Operational.

I also request that the CSFA funding be re-appropriated in the amount of \$194,711. As you have heard, this money is payment for LODD benefits and disability payments for firefighters making the supreme sacrifice or being injured protecting the citizen of Connecticut. This is a small token in respect to the dedication and sacrifices Connecticut firefighters make on a daily basis.

Respectfully,

Richard Hart

DIRECTOR
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