



MYSTIC FIRE DEPARTMENT

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March 8, 2016

Senator Crisco, Representative Megna;
Members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee;

Esteemed Legislators;

I would like to note my and the Mystic Fire Department's support of H.B. No. 5518 AN ACT IMPOSING A SURCHARGE ON CERTAIN PERSONAL RISK INSURANCE POLICIES TO FUND REGIONAL FIRE SCHOOLS' OPERATING BUDGETS AND CERTAIN FIREFIGHTER TRAINING COURSES AND PURCHASES OF FIRE EQUIPMENT

The Fire Service throughout the State of Connecticut has long struggled with funding to operate our regional fire schools and to allow for initial firefighting training. As of late, the cuts to the regional schools budgets have become draconian. We are now just getting bond funds to continue the rebuilding of our regional schools which will require significant but reasonable operating monies. These monies and this funding have been proposed to be zero in upcoming budgets. If fire departments are forced to absorb the entire amount of the regional schools operating funding by increased user fees, many, if not all, of our communities will be unable to afford to send our firefighters to training at our regional fire training schools. Bonding funds spent and slated to be spent on the rebuilding of our regional schools will not be utilized to the fullest extent possible without a means to pay for the operating needs of the schools.

It is my opinion that a modest surcharge on certain personal risk insurance policies is the one best to fund our fire schools operating budgets and to assist with funding initial firefighter training in our state. The burden of communities to fund all their firefighter training needs has become increasingly problematic for towns and cities large and small alike. Please assist the fire service throughout the State of Connecticut by favorably endorsing H.B. No. 5518.

Respectfully

Frank C. Hilbert; Fire Chief, Mystic Fire Department