

# UNIFORMED PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF CONNECTICUT

AFFILIATED WITH INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

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Good afternoon, Honorable Chairmen Rep. Miller and Sen. Osten, members of the Planning and Development 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 UPPFA is comprised of approximately 4,000 Union firefighters in Connecticut.

I am submitting testimony in **support** of SB 423, AAC MUNICIPAL FIRE APPARATUS SAFETY AND TESTING.

In 2014, I was a member of an apparatus safety working group here and was disappointed this initiative was never introduced, despite the working group coming to a consensus as is contained in SB-423.

An aerial apparatus costs anywhere from \$800,000 to upwards of \$1 million, and a pumping apparatus costs approximately \$550,000. These are the backbone of the fire service and these capital expenditures are expected to last at least 20 years. The most integral part of these apparatus is the aerial ladder and pump. At 100', an aerial ladder is constantly placed under stress and strain accomplishing its life and property saving function. A pumper is tasked with efficiently delivering adequate water to extinguish fire, protect lives, and save property. Any failure of these two critical components means lives will be either lost, or at least severely burned or injured, be they civilian or firefighters.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) is the consensus standard utilized to direct fire departments across the country. NFPA 1911 Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus contains, in Chapter 18 and 19, the requirements for conducting performance testing of fire pumps and aerial ladders along with the Nondestructive Test for aerial ladders. The NFPA standards do not have the force of law as a statute or regulation, but are considered the "industry standard" for the fire service. NFPA 1911 is cited in all apparatus accident or apparatus failures in any National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) investigation.

According to CCM's reporting to the 2014 working group, approximately 80% of municipalities abide by the standard. This legislation would bring the remaining 20% into compliance, thus ensuring all the apparatus responding to any fire in Connecticut will function as required. This should be viewed as necessary to make certain the critical components of fire apparatus are functioning and operating as designed for the safety of all.

Please move SB 423 forward.

Thank you,

Richard Hart

*Richard Hart*

DIRECTOR

Legislative/Political Affairs

