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State of Connecticut

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GENERAL BONDING SUBCOMMITTEE

**Testimony  
In Support of Raised Bill 5406**

Public Safety Committee

March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Dear Senator Larson, Representative Dargan, Senator Guglielmo, and Representative Zupkus, thank you all for the opportunity to testify on Raised Bill 5406 "An Act Allowing Safety Personnel to Use Blue Lights."

Last year in our 5 largest cities, Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford, Stamford & Waterbury, 911 was called over five hundred and fifty thousand times. Responding to these emergencies police, ambulance, as well as career and volunteer firefighters are able to respond to calls with an increased degree of quickness due to the lights and sirens on their cars. Under our current law EMS responders in their personal vehicles cannot have blue lights to aide their passage through traffic, increasing response times and potentially increasing fatality rates.

In every emergency seconds matter. When seconds turn into minutes, injuries can turn into fatalities. Response times are absolutely critical when it comes to emergencies. It is unfair to the safety of the public to keep them at risk because the first responders are stuck in traffic.

It is true that blue lights do not have any legal bearing and nobody is required to pull over for a vehicle displaying blue lights. Pulling over for flashing blue lights is a civic courtesy. A courtesy that I hope everyone extends to our first responders. If you or a loved one are ever in an emergency medical situation, wouldn't you want your first responder to be able to respond with the upmost quickness?

I urge that this bill pass committee and be voted on by the full assembly. There is already a growing list of states that allow for EMS responders to use blue lights when responding to emergencies, Connecticut should join this list and continue to put the safety of our people first. I would be happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
  
Terrie Wood  
State Representative  
142st District  
Darien & Rowayton

