

Michael Sinsigalli  
West Hartford Fire Department

## Raised Bill 238

Good Morning,

My name is Michael Sinsigalli. I am an Assistant Chief with the West Hartford Fire Department. I am also the Fire Marshal for the Town of Windsor Locks and I serve on the State Codes and Standards Committee as a fire marshal representative. I am here today to testify in support of Raised Bill 238.

West Hartford, like many communities, suffers from a growing tax burden on its citizens. Increased costs of providing education, human services, and public safety are raising taxes to unprecedented heights and municipalities struggle to minimize increases to the tax rates. However, some increases are necessary. Our aging buildings, commercial, industrial, and residential suffer from an increasing number of fires. In addition, furnishings and contents are made with large amounts of synthetic material which burn hotter, spread fire faster, and create more smoke than the legacy materials. New construction materials and methods create buildings that burn and fail with greater rapidity, as has been proven by fire tests conducted by NIST.

We can begin to control increasing public safety costs by starting to build communities that are inherently safe. We can do this through community standards, such as requiring residential sprinklers in new home construction, which will minimize the severity of a fire and, as a result, reduce the possibility of the fire spreading to adjacent homes as well as minimize the threat of fire to building occupants.

There are opponents of this bill that will testify that this will create unequal building code requirements and enforcement throughout the state and it will. If West Hartford passes and ordinance and Windsor Locks does not, what's the harm? Some communities regulate building height, some restrict lot sizes as a way to create a community to their shared vision. Opponents will also say that we are trying to reduce the number of firefighters. We will always need firefighters because there will always be fires and medical emergencies that require fire rescue services. But we can manage expansion.

We seem to be unable to embrace residential sprinklers on the State level. As we struggle with adoption of this standard, many more homes and subdivisions are being built further increasing fire exposure in the communities. Let each community begin to craft itself as inherently fire safe by allowing each community to consider requiring residential sprinklers.

Please pass Raised Bill 238.