

Joseph R. Sastre  
President  
Town of Groton

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Michael A. Spera  
Vice President  
Town of Old Saybrook

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 450, An Act Concerning Municipal Volunteer Services.**

Holly June Jacobs  
Treasurer  
Town of Manchester

Distinguished members of the Planning and Development Committee,

Joel P. Severance  
Secretary  
Town of Chester

The Connecticut Emergency Management Association (CEMA) is a statewide organization of municipal emergency management directors and emergency management professionals in the private sector and academia. Its members represent more than 100 Connecticut municipalities, individuals, organizations and companies working together to protect citizens and businesses in Connecticut. CEMA represents its members' interests in public policy matters related to emergency management.

Bruce Lockwood  
Past President  
East Hartford

CEMA **supports** Senate Bill 450 and respectfully requests that the committee **approve the bill**. The bill would prohibit municipalities from entering into collective bargaining agreements that limit the ability of municipalities to permit volunteer services for the benefit of municipalities. The bill does not apply to collective bargaining agreements between municipalities and employee organizations representing paid firefighters or police officers.

Today, we live in a world where most citizens are not able to volunteer their time as much as they used to. Individuals and families depend on multiple jobs to live, reducing their ability to volunteer what little free time they have. Our volunteer fire and emergency service agencies have suffered greatly as they can no longer depend on volunteers to support their mission and our local civil preparedness organizations have suffered the same fate.

Senate Bill 450 would encourage greater volunteer participation in important civil preparedness efforts while helping cities and towns that are struggling financially. The bill provides protection for the public safety by exempting professional firefighters and police officers.

On behalf of the members of the Connecticut Emergency Management Association, I would like to commend you for this bill, which would build resiliency in to our collective civil-emergency preparedness capabilities, and thank you for your support and consideration.

If you have any questions regarding CEMA or this testimony, please do not hesitate to contact Joseph R. Sastre, President at [president@cemaonline.org](mailto:president@cemaonline.org), at any time.