

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No.:** HB-6553

AN ACT CONCERNING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND  
AMBULANCE COMPANIES AND THE DEFINITION OF EMPLOYER UNDER

**Title:** THE STATE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT.

**Vote Date:** 2/16/2023

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 1/31/2023

**File No.:**

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor and Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was raised to amend the definition of “employer” to include volunteer fire departments and volunteer ambulance companies under CONN OSHA. This would seek to provide all volunteer fire departments and ambulance companies the same standardized CONN OSHA protections as career fire and ambulance employees.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Dante Bartolomeo, Commissioner, CT Department of Labor:** Offered testimony in support of HB-6553 on behalf of the Connecticut Department of Labor. She stated that currently, federal OSHA lacks jurisdiction over volunteer fire and ambulance departments due to their affiliation with municipalities, and CONN OSHA does not have jurisdiction due to a lack of employer/employee relationship connection. This legislation would allow CONN-OSHA to hold these volunteer departments accountable so that volunteer fire and ambulance workers are protected to the same extent as other career service men and women.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Scott Saalborn, Firefighter Instructor:** He offered his comments in support of this legislation. He stated that this bill would allow CONN-OSHA to hold Volunteer Fire Departments accountable to workplace training and safety standards, and give volunteer fire department members the ability to report unsafe working conditions without fear of retaliation.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

No sources of opposition were expressed

**Reported by:**

**Date: 02/22/2023**

**Sebastian Musante, Assist. Clerk**