

Public Safety and Security Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-135

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR LAW

Title: ENFORCEMENT UNITS.

Vote Date: 3/1/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/22/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

Sen. Kevin A. Witkos, 8th Dist.

Rep. Kara Rochelle, 104th Dist.

Rep. Greg Howard, 43rd Dist.

Rep. Gary A. Turco, 27th Dist.

Rep. Nicole Klarides-Ditria, 105th Dist

Rep. Maria Horn, 64th Dist.

Rep. Jill Barry, 31st Dist.

Rep. Corey B. Paris, 145th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

Currently, there is a deadline (2025) for municipal police departments to become CALEA accredited. The cost to become accredited by CALEA is expensive and not easy to attain. There are many small police departments in the state, and this accreditation requirement will be difficult for these small departments. By not having the requirement of being CALEA certified, they could use Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) for their accreditation which is highly regarded and respected in the state. POST certification would make certification attainable and affordable to many Connecticut Police Departments.

Proposed Substitute Language

The changes in the proposed substitute language clarify that Law Enforcement is required to become certified.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Senator Kevin Witkos, Senate, State of Connecticut

Senator Witkos has heard from many municipal police departments in his district concerned over the impending deadline. Being CALEA certified for them is expensive and not easily

attainable. POST is an option for certification for these police departments and a POST accreditation is highly regarded in the state.

Brian Anderson, Legislative Director, Council 4, AFSCME

Bill 135 will allow police departments to seek CT POST accreditation instead of the more expensive CALEA accreditation. After the initial fee, the department has 3 years to become accredited. Around the 3-year mark, CALEA sends assessors out to assess and determine if the department meets its standards. At this time there is another fee that the department has to pay to CALEA. There are additional fees to keep this accreditation. The members of AFSCME are constantly reminded of the growing costs and shrinking resources. This is another reason police departments are having difficulty hiring and retaining staff.

Florencio Cotto, Police Officer, President, New Haven Police Union, Police Officer Association of CT

CALEA accreditation is expensive. The POST accreditation is consistently less expensive than CALEA. The requirement to be CALEA certified by 2025 is an unfunded mandate and will keep recruitment and retention efforts at bay.

Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

CPCA supports this bill. There are departments that cannot meet the accreditation requirements of CALEA due to the changes required to their buildings or moving their buildings entirely. POST is accredited by CALEA. Removal of this mandate is important to police departments and the communities they serve.

Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns

Supports this bill

Mike Muszynski, State and Federal Relations Manager of Connecticut Conference of Municipalities

Supports this bill.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk

Date: March 11, 2022