Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5452 / Bill Status / Public Hearing Testimony
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL PARTICIPATION IN THE CONNECTICUT LAND MOBILE RADIO NETWORK AND RELATED COSTS.
Vote Date: 3/17/2026
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 3/12/2026
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill intends to eliminate barriers that municipalities face currently due to the costs of Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network by having the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to pay for lifecycle costs. The bill will also require the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection to devise a plan to encourage municipalities to participate in the network.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Ronnell A. Higgins, Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) writes in opposition of the bill. He says the bill will cause the DESPP to assume all lifecycle costs from municipalities that join the Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network (CLMRN). He highlights that these costs are not included in the Governor's budget and would pose serious fiscal challenges for the department. The DESPP looks forward to working further with the Committee.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Gerald Bancroft,Fire Chief, Town of East Windsor, urges the committee to move forward with the legislation. Saying that it provides a "common-sense" solution by proposing that the State do 100% of the required cost for participating municipalities.

Wilfred Blanchette III,Chief of Police, Town of Montville, notes that supporting this legislation is important in order to provide support for towns. He states this is important so that towns can remain integrated in the state system, and does so without putting strain on taxpayers.

Matthew Carl,Chief of Police,East Windsor Police Department, supports the statewide CLMRN system for improving emergency communication. He highlights the challenges they currently face, such as the cost.He says that this bill would help cover these costs and ease the burden on municipalities, while promoting long-term planning to expand the system.

Connecticut Council of Small Towns,shares their support for the bill, saying it will enhance policy safety in small towns. They appreciate that municipalities can join the network without an initial access fee. However, they say many small towns don't have the resources to purchase equipment needed.

James Barton, Fire Chief, Warehouse Point Fire District: Mr. Barton is in support of the bill. He states that the Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network is a vital tool, it allows police, fire, EMS, and emergency management personnel to communicate effectively. He adds that upgrades to this program are not optional, and they increase costs. He believes that this bill is an important step in addressing this issue.

Leonard Bunnell Sr., Mayor, Town of Montville: Mr. Bunnell is in support of the bill. He states that the Connecticut Land Mobile Radio Network (CLMRN) is a critical statewide public safety communications system. He adds that when municipalities integrate into CLMRN, they are responsible for mandatory lifecycle costs required to keep equipment compatible with the statewide network. He states that the bill will fund 100 percent of the required lifecycle costs for municipalities participating in CLMRN. Which will help the town and take strain off taxpayers.

Thomas Conlan, Chief of Police - Deputy EMD, Town of Wilton Mr. Conlan is in support of the bill. He states that the Town of Wilton is a participant in the CLMRN system and has experienced the benefits of being connected to the department statewide. However, he notes, there are large financial impacts that come with these benefits including maintaining compatible hardware, software, and system upgrades.

Kenneth Hanks, Fire Chief and Emergency Manager, Borough of Naugatuck: Mr. Hanks is in support of the bill. He states that the CLMRN is the backbone of public safety communications across the state as it allows police, fire, EMS, and emergency management personnel to communicate across different departments. He states that Naugatuck, like many municipalities, depends heavily on this. He adds that once a municipality integrates into CLMRN, it becomes responsible for mandatory lifecycle costs required to maintain compatibility with the broader system. He believes that the bill is important because it addresses this challenge directly and fairly by proposing that the State of Connecticut fund 100 percent of the required lifecycle costs.

Kevin Glenn,Chief of Police,Town of East Lyme, writes in support of the bill. He appreciates the proposal that the State of Connecticut fund 100 percent of the required lifecycle cost for municipalities participating in CLMRN.

Paul Goldberg,Fire administrator/EMD/Radio System Manager,Town of Windsor, shares his support of the bill saying that it will help alleviate cost stress.

Capitol Region Council of Governments(CRCOG), express their strong support. They highlight that many municipalities can access the system without an initial access fee. They say many communities

still need to invest in other equipment, and this cost can be substantial and hard for municipalities to absorb with their local budgets. They share that this bill addresses these challenges, and requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to cover lifecycle costs.

Warren Hess,Mayor, Borough of Naugatuck, submitted a template of testimony in support of the bill.

David M. Kullgren, Chief of Police, Town of Newtown, shares his support for the bill saying that it provides straightforward and necessary provisions. He says this will allow for towns like Newtown to fully integrate the statewide network without diverting resources.

Richard G. Lennon,Fire Chief, North Branford Fire Department, expresses his support for the bill. He shares that the bill will allow for local,police,EMS, and other emergency personnel to communicate seamlessly, with neighboring jurisdictions and state agencies during emergencies.

James Lovelace,Chief of Police, North Branford, discusses his support of the bill. He says that historically communication failures have proven to be among one of the challenges faced during emergencies. He expresses that the integration of CLMRN will help to prevent these failures and improve readiness. He further supports the bill, because he says it is cost effective and doesn't cause further strain to local budgets and taxpayers.

John Meigel,Fire Marshall,Town of Montville, appreciates the approach of this bill and says it is cost effective and doesn't place strain on local taxpayers.

Micah Messer, Chief, Oakdale Fire Company, Town of Montville, expresses his support and says that it prevents strain of taxpayers dollars. He also says that it will help for communication between emergency personnel.

Tyler Millix,Executive Director, Tolland County Mutual Aid Fire Service Inc., writes in support saying it is cost effective and allows for greater communication between neighboring jurisdictions.

Benjamin Murphy, Deputy Chief of Police, Town of East Windsor, says it will allow for seamless communication between emergency personnel, and appreciates the State of Connecticut funding the required lifecycle cost for CLMRN.

Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), urges the committee to support the legislation. They say this bill would require the state to cover software and hardware maintenance costs for municipalities using the CLMRN. They say this will remove a major financial barrier, and that DESPP will have to create a strategic plan to assess needs, which will improve regional coordination.

David Nelson,Chief,Chesterfield Fire Co, Inc. expresses his support for the bill. Saying that it will be more efficient for first responders. He also highlights that the State of Connecticut covering the lifecycle cost for participating municipalities in CLMRN, will be cost effective.

Leonard Bunnell Sr, Mayor,Town of Montville, shares his support of the bill saying that it is cost effective and provides support for towns, so they can remain integrated in the statewide system. He also highlights the importance of having emergency service members having access to each other and resources during an emergency.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Anonymous 31, Anonymous 32, Anonymous 33, Anonymous 34, Anonymous 35, Anonymous 36, Anonymous 37, Anonymous 38, Anonymous 42: Opposes the bill because of regulation changes with little direct benefit.

Reported by: Emma Rybacki, Clerk
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Date: 3/26/26