Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5456 / Bill Status / Public Hearing Testimony
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION.
Vote Date: 3/17/2026
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/12/2026
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was raised by the Public Safety and Security Committee to better expand the accessibility and workings of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. If passed, this bill intends to improve efficiency and streamline the department's use of resources.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

The JFS language amends the bill that the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection is required to appoint three deputy commissioners to assist the Department.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Higgins, Ronnell A., Commissioner-Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection – Commissioner Higgins submitted written testimony in opposition of H.B. 5456. While DESPP supports a third Deputy Commissioner of Administration, included in the Governor's budget, it does not support the restructuring of the existing deputy commissioners. The Commissioner states that although the intent of this legislation may be to enhance coordination, the department has not been made aware of any operational gap that necessitates the statutory restructuring described in this legislation. He states that the agency was not consulted during the drafting of this proposal and has not been presented with operational concerns that would justify such a change.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

9 Anonymous: submitted written testimony opposing the expansion of the bill without real benefit.

Reported by: Emma Rybacki, Clerk
Jacqueline Olsen, Assist. Clerk

Date: 3/31/26