



Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection

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03/25/2024

State House of Representatives Confirms Ronnell A. Higgins as Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection

HARTFORD -- With a unanimous voice vote, the state of House of Representatives Monday confirmed Ronnell A. Higgins as Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

Higgins leads an agency that includes six different divisions, including the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control; the Connecticut State Police; the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security; the Police Officers Standards and Training Council; the Division of Scientific Services; and the Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications.

"I want to create a blueprint for excellence for the agency. This agency is filled with professionals who are doing amazing work," Higgins said. "I see my job as requiring listening, learning and then leading our work so that we are bringing forth the most promising and emerging practices to benefit the people of the state of Connecticut."

Higgins, who is 53 and a lifelong Connecticut resident, said his early priorities include recruiting more state troopers, traffic enforcement to improve highway safety, election security and emergency preparedness. DESPP has 1,610 employees, including approximately 930 state troopers.

"Everyone at DESPP is working each and every day to build the public's trust," Higgins said.

Prior to his nomination and joining DESPP in October, Higgins served with Yale University as Associate Vice President for Public Safety and Community Engagement. He previously served as Chief of Police for Yale beginning in 2011, and served as Director of Public Safety beginning in 2015. He first joined Yale's police department in 1997 as a police officer and served the department in several ranks, including as sergeant, patrol commander, and lieutenant. Prior to joining Yale, Higgins worked as a correction officer with the Connecticut Department of Correction at the Bridgeport Correctional Center from 1994 to 1997.

Higgins has been an active member of several government and community groups, including the Connecticut Commission on Racial and Ethnic Disparities, the Connecticut Police Officers Standards and Training Council, the Boys and Girls Club of New Haven, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives for Connecticut. He was recently named among the "Most Influential People in Security" by *Security* magazine and named one of the "100 Most Influential Black People in Connecticut" by the Connecticut NAACP.

He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in law enforcement from the University of New Haven, and earned a Master of Arts degree in security studies from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

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