



House Bill 6965

AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL, DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL, THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIRE MARSHAL TRAINING COUNCIL AND A FIRE AND CATASTROPHIC RESTORATION BUSINESS LICENSE

Testimony of the Department of Administrative Services

Public Safety and Security Committee

February 18, 2025

Senator Gaston, Representative Boyd, Senator Cicarella, Representative Howard, and distinguished members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. We thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on **House Bill 6965: An Act Concerning the State Fire Marshal, A Deputy State Fire Marshal, The Membership of the Fire Marshal Training Council, and a Fire and Catastrophic Restoration Business License**.

DAS opposes Section 1 of this bill because the proposed changes conflict with existing state statutes.

Sec. 1(b) of the bill prohibits the State Fire Marshal from being dismissed unless the Department of Administrative Services' commissioner (1) provides written notice of the reasons for the dismissal, and (2) provides the State Fire Marshal an opportunity to be heard in the State Fire Marshal's own defense, at a hearing before the commissioner.

Sec. 4-1a of the Connecticut General Statutes governs appointed officials, and states:

Unless otherwise provided by law, any appointed official of the state, including any person appointed to a board, commission, council, authority, task force, committee or other body, shall serve at the pleasure of the person or body authorized to make the appointment but no longer than the term of office of such appointing authority or until such official's successor is appointed and qualified, whichever is longer.

The State Fire Marshal is a high-level manager who serves in an appointed position. As such, they serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. This legislation would establish procedures for this appointed position that traditionally adhere to classified (civil service) positions, such as the right to due process. This is inconsistent with the nature of such an appointed role, and these proposed changes would result in the position having a reduced level of accountability.

Sec. 1(c) of the bill requires the State Fire Marshal to appoint a Deputy State Fire Marshal to assist the State Fire Marshal in carrying out their duties. This proposal is duplicative of – and conflicts with – current law. Sec. 29-312 of the Connecticut General Statutes already establishes the position of



Deputy State Fire Marshal and indicates that the appointing authority for such position is the commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services. If passed, this language would conflict with existing law and create inconsistency with regard to the appointing authority for agency appointments.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. For the reasons outlined above, we urge the Committee to reject Section 1 of House Bill 6965.