



March 29th, 2019

Everyone,

After hearing much feedback and concern over the past 2 weeks from several volunteer fire chiefs about **H.B. 5658 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF RED AND BLUE LIGHTS ON VEHICLES OPERATED BY POLICE OFFICERS** (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/TOB/h/pdf/2019HB-05658-R01-HB.PDF>), I met with Rep. Ben McGorty, the sponsor of the bill, this week. Rep. McGorty, one of the co-chairs of the bipartisan Fire/EMS Caucus, responded that it was not his intention to pose any threat to firefighters who properly use either blue or red and white lights on vehicles they use for Fire Service. Rep. McGorty added that the intent of his proposed bill is to prevent Uber and Lyft drivers from using red and blue lights on the front of their livery vehicles. Rep. McGorty asked me to re-print his testimony on his bill in this update:

“For the record, I am State Representative Ben McGorty, and I am proud to represent the 122nd District -the residents of Shelton, Stratford and Trumbull.

I am here today to urge your support of HB 5658. The purpose of this bill is to restrict the use of steady illuminated red and blue lights to police vehicles only.

Glowing logos in the windshield for popular rideshare companies Lyft and Uber help passengers identify what vehicle to get into. However, the illuminated lights drivers use are distracting motorists on the road.

The use of this industry provided illuminated lighting is representing the vehicle in some situations, mistakenly, as an emergency vehicle (police or fire). As motorists are keenly sensitive to move over a lane for an emergency vehicle with lighting visible, this bill would eliminate confusion in a situation where a motorist may erroneously believe what is an emergency vehicle to be actually either Uber or Lyft. There should be zero misunderstanding by a motorist over what is viewed, by its lighting, as either a police or fire vehicle on our roads.

Thank you again for your consideration of HB 5658, and I urge the committee’s support.  
Sincerely Yours, Ben McGorty State Representative 122<sup>nd</sup> District.”

Rep. McGorty hoped that this information would clear up any confusion that there might be regarding his proposed bill. **Please let me know what you think.**

Next week, we expect to hear the details of the new language in **S.B. 164** AN ACT INCLUDING CERTAIN MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS WITHIN THE DEFINITION OF "PERSONAL INJURY" UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION STATUTES, "The PTSD Bill." The Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations discussed new developments in the proposed bill this past week. We are waiting for full disclosure of the bill details in the next few days.

Additionally, we expect to have a date for the next Fire/EMS Caucus meeting next week. At this point, the plan is to include PTSD and the Regional Fire Schools at the top of the Fire/EMS Caucus meeting agenda.

This is the last week that I will print the full list of Fire Service-related bills that we have been tracking since the beginning of the session. Beginning next week, I will reduce the House Bill Status Report to include only the bills that have successfully JFed out of committee.

**Additionally, I ask again that if you plan as a member of the Fire Service to submit oral or written testimony about any proposed legislation, please contact CSFA President John Carew ([carew@csfa.org](mailto:carew@csfa.org)), Joint Council of Connecticut Fire Service Organizations Chairman Chief Dave Billings ([billingsd@manchesterct.gov](mailto:billingsd@manchesterct.gov)) or myself ([collins@csfa.org](mailto:collins@csfa.org)) in advance so we can keep track and be sure that we remain unified with regard to our support for or opposition to any bill.**

I have attached an updated CSFA House Bill Status Report.

If you would like to receive a copy of this update by email, **please contact me by email and I will add your name to my distribution list. Please put "CSFA Update Request" as the subject of your email. If you have already requested and I missed it, I apologize, sometimes the email gets thick on this end. Please submit again with the subject "CSFA Update Request".**

Sincerely,

Leon Collins

Legislative Representative

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