

City Of Torrington



ELINOR CARBONE
Mayor

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March 13, 2015

DSET Docket 13-01
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
Division of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications
1111 Country Club Road
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

Re: DSET Docket 13-01

To Whom It May Concern:

Knowing that you will undoubtedly receive many letters concerning the above matter, and wishing to be respectful of your time, I will get to the point of my correspondence immediately. The current funding strategy proposed by the State Department of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications that determines the subsidies to the regional dispatch centers will cause a significant hardship on the City of Torrington. As proposed, the City of Torrington will see an increase in costs for service by approximately \$130,000.00.

I cannot support this proposal and hope you will work with us to re-evaluate making proper adjustments to insure the subsidy formula is fair for all municipalities and it is more aligned with the state regionalization strategy.

When the state of Connecticut Office of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications released a strategy that called for the regionalization of the Public Safety Answering Points (Dispatch Centers) a funding formula for subsidizing the costs of the regional centers was presented as an incentive for the consolidation. The formula was designed to lower the costs to the municipalities that chose to regionalize.

The strategy, including the subsidization of the costs, was developed believing that a consolidation of dispatch centers would not only bring financial savings but also increase the efficiency of the PSAPs which would, in turn provide a higher level of services to the residents and visitors of the state.

As a result of a belief in the state strategy, combined with the efficiency and cost savings, 20 towns in the Northwest corner of Connecticut have joined to form a regional Dispatch Center (Litchfield County Dispatch).

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In 2009 the City of Torrington decided that it would consolidate their Police, Fire and EMS dispatching becoming a member of Litchfield County Dispatch. Throughout the two year transition process, in collaboration with many partners including officials from OSET (now DSET), the City of Torrington built a facility that now serves as the home of Litchfield County Dispatch. The transition of services that now comprise Litchfield County Dispatch was looked upon as the model of the expectations that the State of Connecticut had for consolidation of PSAP's statewide.

Because of the small rural towns served by Litchfield County Dispatch, the new formula will cause a significant reduction in state subsidy and result in significant additional costs to each of the 20 municipalities LCD serves. This proposed formula seems to deviate from the strategy as it does not support continued regionalization efforts.

Additionally, the new formula is counter-intuitive to a cost-saving initiative, but merely a re-allocation of funds from the three larger regional PSAPs to the three smaller. This is accomplished by removing the "number of municipalities served" from the formula. Again, contrary to the strategy the new formula focuses only on population and number of 911 emergency calls received by the PSAP.

There is a significant flaw in this calculation because it does not consider the total volume of calls for service into the PSAP. The workload of a regional dispatch center is not solely determined by the 911 call volume or the population. LCD receives 30,000 911 calls annually. Litchfield County Dispatch receives approximately 80,000 calls for service on ten-digit lines into the center. This heavy call volume is a result of dispatching a municipal police department (Torrington) and is not considered in the new formula. These calls need to be included in the calculation of call volume.

As the mayor of the City of Torrington, which will be significantly impacted by this new funding formula, I cannot support this proposal and wish to work with you in developing a fair and equitable formula for the continued support of the regional efforts we have undertaken.

Respectfully,



Elinor Carbone
Mayor