

# Public Safety and Security Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-375 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL MAPPING DATA SERVICES.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/5/2026

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill was raised in order to better expand the use of data mapping services, which are a critical resource in providing adequate safety response in schools across Connecticut. It also establishes a grant program to better equip municipalities and municipal police forces to tackle these situations in a time of need. It also standardizes the use of program softwares that if such a situation is needed, there is no lapse in response due to a pay wall or lacking the technology needed. Additionally, through the collection of data, this bill will also better understand the nature in which if a situation is to occur, establish better responses going forward.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**[Ronnell Higgins, Commissioner, DESPP:](#)** Commissioner Higgins is in opposition of the bill. While he supports the intent of the bill, he states that the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) already has established resources relating to school security and while there is support to continue expanding in this area, he claims the proposal lacks funding and it is not included in the Governor's budget.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**[Hardy Allen, Critical Response Group \(CRG\):](#)** Mr. Allen is in support of the bill. He claims that he directs his testimony towards testimony submitted in opposition by Connecticut's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Commissioner Higgins from DESPP. He states that he agrees and

plans to collaborate with the Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees to determine appropriate funding. He states that he agrees with the GIS regarding school mapping data improvements. He adds that he would be willing to collaborate with the GIS to fix this issue. He claims that the GIS believes the bill is too restrictive, which he claims the requirements would have made maps accessible to first responders. He adds the bill requires mapping data to be compatible with all security software platforms used by schools and public safety agencies. He then states that Sections (b)(3) through (b)(9) are important to ensure that mapping products are held to high quality standards and making sure they can be continuously used under stress.

**Peter Brown, Fire Lieutenant, City of Norwalk:** Mr. Brown is in support of the bill. He states that when a firefighter is responding to a call, they need information such as addresses, types of structures, natures of calls, and best access points. However, in many cases even if they have most of the information there are still gaps. He states that the bill would require school districts to have detailed mapping of all their schools' properties. He believes that this is an important step in preventing further injury during a crisis.

**L.J. Fusaro, Chief of Police, CT Police Chief Association:** Mr. Fusaro states there are emergency calls made everywhere in the state, sometimes they are made to schools. He adds that schools are very complex in layout. He states the ability to fully understand the layout of a building is crucial to a successful operation. He states that allowing the DESPP to evaluate and implement school mapping data would be very helpful to officers. For these reasons, Mr. Fusaro is in support of the bill.

**Betsy Gara, Executive Director, Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST):** Ms. Gara states that she is in support of the bill, however she is concerned about the cost. She urges the committee to create a fund to support mapping costs.

**Mike Muszynski, CCM:** Mr. Muszynski is in support of the bill. He believes that these mapping tools are important to ensuring that emergency response personnel and school officials understand a building's layout.

**Fred Spagnolo, Chief of Police, City of Waterbury:** Chief Spagnolo says that currently, school mapping lacks consistency, is sometimes outdated, and lacks clear labeling. He states that the bill would create a statewide criterion for school mapping. He adds that this is much needed to ensure reliability, consistency, and immediate usability across jurisdictions. In response to testimony in opposition of the bill, he states that the bill does not restrict the GIS formats. For these reasons, Chief Spagnolo is in support of the bill.

**Winnie Zhao:** Ms. Zhao is in support of the bill. She states that across the country states are increasingly using school mapping as a core part of school safety and emergency preparedness. She adds that Florida and Maryland have established school mapping data programs centered on first-responder use. She also states that the use of maps may reduce confusion when an emergency requires more than one agency. She also raises attention to the grants created in the bill to help school districts with mapping.

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Alfredo Herrera, Geographic Information Officer, Office of Policy and Management:** Mr. Herrera offered testimony in opposition to the bill. He claims that un-amended, the bill will harm the ability of the state and municipalities to receive digital data in geographic information systems (GIS). He also claims that Sections (b)(3) through (b)(9) should be included in a request for proposals, as they are too restrictive. He states that Section 3 is a preference for printed over digital formatted maps and may not match requirements now or in the future. He adds that Section 5 is a requirement regarding

maps being oriented “true north”, which he believes is not necessary. Sections 7 and 8 specify the labeling of a static or printed map; he claims that this is better achieved with geospatial data. Mr. Herrera is also concerned with Section (c) which states that the department should develop eligibility criteria for the grants and the associated mapping. He believes it should be made clear that the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) is the entity that creates and maintains the mapping requirements.

**Reported by:** Emma Rybacki, Clerk  
Olivia Buczak, Assist. Clerk

**Date:** 3/26/26