

My name is Ahmad Asgharian and I live and vote in Manchester, Connecticut. I am writing to express my opinion on LCO #3471: An Act Concerning Police Accountability (AACPA) with amendments.

I would like to make the following comments. I strongly advocate for strengthening infrastructure and mechanism for police accountability in Connecticut as mentioned below.

Section 8 & 9- Collective Bargaining and Public Records

All complaints, internal affairs' reviews and personnel records of officers against whom complaints have been made by civilians, should be subject to FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) for full transparency.

Section 14- Police Badge and Name Tag Identification

Officers must be required to prominently display their badge and name tag.

Section 17- Civilian Review Board

It is critical that municipalities have a civilian review board with subpoena power and full investigative powers. This legislation should go beyond allowing CRBs and require municipal CRBs with subpoena power.

Section 19 & 20 Body Cameras and Dashboard Cameras

National outcomes on the efficacy of body cameras are mixed. Without accountability around body cameras being turned on and used, body cameras aren't effective in providing true transparency or actual accountability. Body cameras should be triggered by weapons release and have retroactive recapture capabilities. There must also be consequences for not turning body cameras on or else the investment into this technology and video storage is not well spent.

Sections 21 & 22- Prohibition on Consent Searches

Connecticut must outlaw police officers from asking for any documents other than a driver's license at traffic stops. Asking for non-driving related identification is unnecessary and puts many community members at risk.

Connecticut must ban all stop and frisk related policies and outlaw police searches without probable cause, even if consent is offered. Police officers are frequently intimidating and civilians consent out of fear.

Section 30- Officers' Duty to Intervene to Stop Use of Excessive Force

It is important that officers are mandated to intervene when they witness excessive force and that when officers intervene, they do not face retaliation from other police officers.

Section 30- Office of Inspector General

Establishing the Office of Inspector General is an important step in building the necessary infrastructure for independent investigations into use of force and other police misconduct. Police

accountability is not possible without independent investigative entities at the state and municipal levels.

Section 40- Prohibition of Police Using Military Equipment

Connecticut does not want or need militarized policing in our communities. We must divest from the 1033 program and dispose of militarized equipment. We understand that the militarization of our police officers only endangers our communities- especially Black and Brown communities.

Section 41- Civil cause of action against certain police officers

We must end qualified immunity for police officers who violate civil rights and perpetrate violence against civilians. Police officers must be held accountable for their misconduct. Just as physicians must carry the liability for malpractice, so must police officers in our state. Corrections officers should also be included in this section of the legislation.

Also, de funding the police is necessary so that we invest the money for purposes such as safe/healthy/affordable housing, healthy food access, clean water & air, education equity, universal quality healthcare for physical and mental health, family sustaining wages and a robust safety net.

Thank you,

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