

Alicia McDonald  
619 Kettletown Road  
Southbury, CT 06488

July 17, 2020

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Rebimbas, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Alicia McDonald and I live and vote in Southbury, Connecticut. I am writing in support of LCO #3471: An Act Concerning Police Accountability (AACPA) with amendments. I am appreciative to all Connecticut representatives that stand behind this Bill, however, I am not content with new measures being taken. I believe police do need to be held accountable, especially those who racially profile, brutalize, and murder civilians.

In Sections 1-4 & 15, the current language grants the police the authority to police themselves in the certification and decertification process. Therefore, this is counterintuitive towards what we are trying to accomplish, which is the accountability of police officers who have broken the law because they should not be considered to be above the law. I believe this language should be amended to create an independent person, that does not have a conflict of interest, to be in charge of this.

In Section 18, the current language includes that police departments evaluate whether social workers would be useful or not to replace them for some of the work revolving around mental health situations. Since police have a conflict of interest in making this call, the language should be amended so that an independent person can determine this. Someone who has advance knowledge on the education and training, both police officers and social workers undergo, should be making this call.

In Section 19 & 20, the language states that the use of body cameras are required, but that still does not reduce the amount of police violence or increase police accountability in itself. They need to be accompanied by adequate policies that provide real accountability for police. Guilty police officers have been given paid leave or even a transfer in stations after murdering a citizen, which is not even close to the retribution they should be receiving.

In Sections 33-35, the current language needs to be taken one step further. While we do need a new inspector general position to investigate police use of force and DOC custodial deaths, we also need an independent prosecutor. Police officers are hired with their own prejudices' and there is substantial evidence showing that implicit bias training does not reduce police brutality or significantly change police behavior. Furthermore, mandatory implicit bias training should not be included in this bill because it most likely will not change anything.

Thank you for your service of our state,  
Alicia McDonald