

CT Judiciary Committee, lawmakers and state representatives,

I'm deeply concerned about the direction our state is taking as it relates to protecting our citizens, the current political unrest and the growing momentum around "defunding" our police. As we've seen in major cities across the country, where defunding the police has increased in support and where criminal activity is now being excused, those cities have seen crime increase at an alarming rate, and violent crime activity increase over 100%.

We all support reform for the better of our citizens and within the police force. But any such reform needs to have the end result of making our communities safer, police better and growing harmony between both our citizens and police. Our police are members of the community and risk their lives to protect and serve their communities. Bills should be put forth that have this in mind, and the current legislation is heavily anti police in tone and action, and this is wholly unacceptable.

Ending qualified immunity will not only impact police officer, but will increase the financial burden on the town/city as well, as they will still be named in lawsuits. The current bill gives the power of decertification of police without any form of due process or appeal process, should any law enforcement unit determine that conduct is in violation of use of force. Our justice system is founded in due process, and this bill essentially eliminates that. As it stands now, the qualified immunity law does not protect an y officer from a *substantiated* claim of misconduct, criminal conduct or excessive force. Thus ending qualified immunity does not change the laws in place, other than denying due process and putting an insurmountable amount of financial burden on police officers, who do an extremely dangerous job for very little pay.

The bill as it stands will have a crippling effect on our state, cities and towns. Police will not be able to do their jobs, they will stand down as violent crimes are committed (for fear of being subject to an unwarranted claim by a criminal suspect while being denied due process and any protections afforded by the job). Officers will retire / resign en masse, new recruiting efforts will evaporate and crime will increase exponentially. This is a highly dangerous bill that should in no way be passed.

Last year police in CT used force in only .02% of all interactions with the public. Our state is already ahead of the curve on reform, accountability and actions. Again, while we all agree in smart reform and in doing all we can to work better and together we have a responsibility to only pass laws that improve our community safety, this does not do that.

I implore you to sa NO to this bill. The voters across the state are watching and we will not forget the positions on this. Let's work together in unifying, not as a group so divisive that we make CT a very dangerous place to live. PASSing this bill will see massive increases in violence, and we do not want what's happening in NYC, Chicago, Atlanta, Minneapolis and Seattle to come to CT.

Thank you,

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