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As a citizen of this state, I am discouraged by this proposed bill draft LCO #3471. As a society we will always have members who will refuse to do the right thing, our police members are individuals willing to go to work each day to stand up to those individuals and enforce the consequences of the "rules" we as a society have chosen to abide by. They are protecting the most vulnerable amongst us, yet this bill leaves our police members unprotected against frivolous law suits, of which is guaranteed to rise substantially by individuals looking to make money. Proof of which can be found by individuals already incarcerated, some of whom will sue even when they know they weren't wronged by staff members, just to see if the state will settle and they can win some money. This bill will not only leave our police vulnerable to these types of suits, but will add undue stress, in an already stressful job. Furthermore, to ask them to pay for liability insurance to attempt to protect themselves and their family from these frivolous suits is just distasteful. Police and their families already put so much on the line everyday, and are asked to make split decisions in high stress situations, it is easy to look back on situations and criticize others for wrong actions, when you are not the one in that stressful situation.

The idea of this bill to protect the community from reckless and extreme force makes logical sense but it should not be contingent on reduced safety and protection of all of our law abiding police officers, who want to protect, and help their communities. As an individual who has loved ones and friends in State and Local police as well as the Department of Corrections. I implore you to oppose this bill as it is written and to reach out to the lower level individuals of each of the aforementioned organizations and to have open discussions with them about how the proposed bill will affect them. I then encourage you to facilitate open discussions between them and the public to reach a mutually agreed upon best course of action to best protect our communities from unnecessary police brutality and profiling while maintaining protections and safety for our officers so they may continue to choose to protect our most vulnerable. Thank you.