

**LCO #3471 An Act Concerning Police Accountability** is an important first step but it must not be the last. I have reviewed the bill and offer the following comments.

#### §§ 1-4 & 15 — POLICE OFFICER CERTIFICATION AND DECERTIFICATION

Officers already on the force should not be grandfathered in. All officers must be certified.

#### §§ 3 & 15-16 — MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENTS FOR POLICE OFFICERS

Policing is high stress and often traumatic work. Mental health assessments should be conducted yearly, and treated the same as physical health assessments. We must take as much care of officers' mental and spiritual well-being as of their physical fitness. This care will do much to change police culture from one of control and domination to one of compassion and problem-solving.

#### §§ 5 & 6 — CROWD MANAGEMENT POLICY

These sections appear to be a good start. I hope that CT residents will have input into the details of the Crowd Management Policy.

#### §§ 8 & 9 — COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND PUBLIC RECORDS DISCLOSURE

This measure is vital and must be contained in the final legislation. Our Attorney General must defend the legislation vigorously against contracts clause challenge.

#### §§ 10 & 11 — REPORTS ON RECRUITING MINORITY POLICE OFFICERS

Recruiting, retaining, and promoting minority police officers should not be limited to units policing ethnically diverse communities. White communities need to get used to seeing black and brown faces in positions of authority. Changing white people's image of black and brown people is part of changing how policing is done. In addition, the life experiences and perspectives of minority officers on the force should be routinely solicited for input on policies and cases, so that the overall culture of the police force is deeply informed by the lived experience of black and brown people.

## § 12 — POLICE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TASK FORCE

The proceedings and findings of the task force must be open to the public to examine.

## § 13 — POST MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

This measure does not go far enough. If the POST membership is 20, then 11 of its members should be representatives of CT's communities. The people must hold the voting majority. In addition, representatives of black, brown, and disabled communities must compose at least half of the community contingent.

The people who are most policed **MUST** be the most represented on this commission.

## § 14 — POLICE BADGE AND NAME TAG IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Cannot happen soon enough. Badges and name tags need to be large enough and clear enough that they can be easily read from a distance of 6 feet.

## § 17 — CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARDS

I'm not sure if this measure is consonant with the overriding priority to DEFUND policing. However, if evidence gathered by civilian review boards is applied in conjunction with § 41 — CIVIL CAUSE OF ACTION AGAINST CERTAIN POLICE OFFICERS which abolishes qualified immunity for police officers, then I am in favor of establishing these boards. *In addition I feel it is essential that no police department — municipal nor state — fund the defense of officers being sued by victims of police violence.* The understanding that one is LEGALLY and MATERIALLY accountable for injuries one does to others is much more effective at curbing unnecessary police violence. If the violence is indeed justified, let that be determined in open court, not by default policy.

## § 18 — EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS RESPONDING TO CERTAIN POLICE CALLS

This measure is a FIRST STEP toward building community resolution teams, and ending the criminalization of the human responses to the traumas of poverty and oppression. Broken brake lights, sleeping in parks and abandoned buildings, driving without insurance, intoxication, mental health crisis, and domestic disturbance need community response not police response. Police should be the LAST resort for such matters, not the first.

## §§ 19 & 20 — BODY CAMERAS, DASHBOARD CAMERAS, AND RELATED GRANTS

Body cameras and dashboard cameras have not reduced police violence. For one thing, they seem to malfunction or get turned off very conveniently. It is much more important to abolish qualified immunity, abolish department funding of officers' defense. If officers are under investigation for excessive use of force they should not be paid during their administrative leave. If found to have used excessive force that resulted in permanent injury or death they should be terminated, pension revoked, and prohibited from rehire in any police or security position. Real consequences make real deterrents.

## §§ 21 & 22 — PROHIBITION ON CONSENT SEARCHES

This is an essential measure to protect 4th amendment rights and must be included in the final legislation.

## § 21 — PROHIBITION ON ASKING FOR NON-DRIVING IDENTIFICATION OR DOCUMENTATION

This is an essential measure to protect 4th amendment rights and must be included in the final legislation.

## § 23 — PRE-DOCKETING PROSECUTORIAL REVIEW OF CRIMINAL CHARGES

I'm not certain that I understand the implications of this provision so I offer no comment.

## §§ 24-27 — PENALTIES FOR FALSE REPORTING

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

## § 28 — MISUSE OF THE EMERGENCY 9-1-1 SYSTEM BASED ON BIGOTRY OR BIAS

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

## § 29 — JUSTIFIED USE OF DEADLY PHYSICAL FORCE AND CHOKEHOLDS

This measure does not go far enough.

Use of deadly force should be restricted to ONLY when necessary to defend the officer or third parties present from the use or imminent use of deadly physical force.

Deadly force should not be a tool of arrest or preventing escape, regardless of the offense. Police must not be judge, jury, and executioner.

Chokeholds are use of deadly force and should be subject the same restrictions as use of gun or lethal taser.

## § 30 — OFFICERS' DUTY TO INTERVENE TO STOP USE OF EXCESSIVE FORCE

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

## § 30 — USE OF FORCE RECORD-KEEPING AND REPORTING

This is a necessary FIRST step. It must be followed with sanction for officers using excessive force. POST or similar commission, composed of equal parts professional and community members should study and make recommendations for a system of sanctions that will deter and prevent excessive force by police.

## §§ 31 & 32 — SECURITY SERVICE AND SECURITY OFFICER QUALIFICATIONS

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

### § 33 — OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

This seems useful and appropriate to me, but the OIG must not exist in lieu of civil penalties sought by victims.

### §§ 34 & 35 — OIG INVESTIGATIONS

All investigations must be transparent and open to the public.

### §§ 36 & 37 — CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER INVESTIGATION OF DEATHS IN POLICE CUSTODY

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

### §§ 38 & 39 — PROHIBITIONS ON PEDESTRIAN CITATION QUOTAS

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

### § 40 — PROHIBITION ON POLICE USING MILITARY EQUIPMENT

This is an essential measure and must be included in the final legislation.

§ 41 — CIVIL CAUSE OF ACTION AGAINST CERTAIN POLICE OFFICERS

This is an absolutely essential (and laudable!) measure and must be included in the final legislation.

The next essential step is that no police department — municipal nor state — fund the defense of officers being sued by victims of police violence.

All of the above is my testimony as a citizen and resident of the state of Connecticut, submitted to the Judiciary Committee Listening Session on Police Accountability, in regard to **LCO #3471 An Act Concerning Police Accountability**, this day, Friday, July 17, 2020.