

Dear Connecticut Legislators,

We are writing as stakeholders within Connecticut and a founding member of the Waterbury Strong Community Collective. We ask that you vote YES on “An Act Concerning Police Accountability, LCO# 3471” Organizers across the state have rallied, protested, marched, signed petitions, made calls demanding policy change. If real policies aren’t kept within this bill the trust between our communities and police department may fall into a much deeper divide and rapidly. Transparency and accountability has been something that has lacked in our systems within the city of Waterbury, now is the time to really stand with the people of our city and vote to keep this bill with Qualified Immunity included. We recognize the bill is not perfect, but it is a much needed starting point. Specifically, We support the follow components:

- Granting power that allows municipalities to establish Civilian Review Boards with Subpoena powers.
- Outlawing police searches without probable cause, even if the person consents to the search
- Outlawing police offers from asking for any documents (such as green cards, other immigration documents) other than a driver's license from people they pull-over during traffic stops
- Mandating a duty to intervene if a police officer witnesses another officer using excessive or illegal use-of-force
- Ending qualified immunity for officers who violate people’s civil rights
- Banning stop-and-frisk in Connecticut
- The demilitarization of Connecticut police departments, including the disposal of all military equipment currently held by police departments
- The requirement for police officers to prominently display their badge

We also want to highlight the component of the bill we disagree with, which include:

- The overrepresentation of police officers and politicians on the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. They make up 12/20 of the Council’s membership. This council should be more diverse, with limited 5 public service officers Max.

WSSC hopes our legislators Vote yes to the bill and any amendments to this draft be Crafted with the thought of the 76+ people who have died at the hands of Connecticut Police departments since 2001 and only 1 officer was ever charged because of qualified immunity. Pass this for the people of Connecticut and more importantly Waterbury . Thank you for your time and I hope you will be on the right side of history with this historic bill.

Best Regards,

Demetre Coles  
President  
Waterbury Strong Community Collective