

To Whom It May Concern

My name is Elizabeth Jones from Prospect, CT and I am a Police Officer for the Town of Cromwell. I am Police Officer, a mother, wife, daughter, sister, and friend. I used to be proud to say I am a Police Officer, but lately I am scared to admit it.

As a teenager, I dreamt of becoming a police officer and making a difference in the community. I volunteered as an EMT and firefighter to better prepare for my career. I earned a college education, worked on my physical fitness, and maintained a healthy “acceptable” social life. I did everything in my power to become what I thought was a hero.

As I sit here writing this letter, I think about all the time, effort, blood, sweat, and tears I put into becoming a police officer. I also think about all the times as a police officer I’ve been called a pig, been sworn at, and physically assaulted. There have been times in my career where I have been brought to tears because of the good time and the bad. I can honestly say the good outweighs the bad but within the last few months evil has infiltrated my career. The evil I am referring to is the “bad cops”, the individuals who have pulled the wool over our eyes. The “bad cops” who violated the oath to protect and serve the community. The “bad cops” who brought dishonor to the entire police community. I do not condone excessive force and I would never allow such incidents to occur while I am present. I understand that the public is enraged by the killing of George Floyd, but so am I. Just because I wear the uniform does not mean I supported Officer Chauvin actions. I appreciate that the state coming together to try to hold police officers more accountable, but I have one simple question. Does the State of Connecticut Police Officers have an excessive use of force, racial bias, or abuse of power problem? The answer is no.

Like every career there is room for improvement but I don’t think the proposed bill is “improving” the police profession. Are all surgeon’s scrutinized after one single surgeon kills a patient? Is a politician asked to resign if he or she votes for an unpopular bill? Are teachers asked to resign if a child is bullied in school or fails a course? Police Officers are held to a standard that no other profession is required to uphold. I understand that a police officer’s responsibilities are much greater than some other professions but I welcome you to walk a day in my boots. I welcome you to kiss your spouse and child goodbye in the morning knowing it may be the last time you kiss them. I welcome you to endure the verbal and physical abuse daily. I welcome you to wear a bulletproof vest, duty belt, and the uniform and make a split-second decision to kill another mother’s child to protect yours!

I ask you to take the time to talk to your friends, neighbors, relatives, and the dedicated men and women of your local police department. This bill is restricting my ability to do my job to the fullest and protect your family and mine.

Below are a few concerns I have regarding the proposed bill,

Section 7 Bias Training:

- most police departments have a biased policing policy

Section 12

Task Force to Study Necessity of Police at road construction sites

- Police Officers assigned to road construction protect the public operating motor vehicles as well as the construction crew working on the site. My concern is that this is a personal attack on police officer's livelihood and income

Merits and Feasibility of requiring police to buy and maintain liability insurance as a condition of employment

- Police Officers will be forced to pay liability insurance by putting their life on the line to protect others?

Establish requirement that police stops be based on enforcement of a primary traffic violation

- Hypothetical Scenario: A motor vehicle stop was conducted on a vehicle legally parked on the road side. The driver is having a life-threatening medical emergency. But if they are legally pulled off the road then according to this bill I CAN NOT conduct a stop?

No Knock warrants

- Hypothetical Scenario: If I am serving a no knock search warrant on a residence where a known violent offender possesses firearms, a knock warrant would allow the person to prepare themselves and potentially arm themselves with a firearm.

Section 16 Mental Health Assessment

- What is the purpose of the evaluation? My concern is that the legislature is insinuating that police officers are not mentally fit to perform. I again ask, is a surgeon required to have a mental health assessment regularly?

Section 17 Civilian Review Boards

- How can a civilian with no experience as police officer make career ending decisions for a police officer?

Section 21 No Consent Motor Vehicle Searched

- Hypothetical Scenario: A motor vehicle stop is conducted for a motor vehicle violation. The occupant consents to a search of the vehicle. During the search the officer located an unsecured firearm under the driver's seat. The officer seized the firearm due to the operating not having a valid pistol permit. Without the consensual search the firearm would remain in the individual's possession and the individual may have intended to use the firearm to harm another.

Section 22 No Consent Pedestrian Searches

- Same scenario as motor vehicle searches

Section 30 Duty to Intervene

- I agree with intervening with any unreasonable or illegal use of force, but again why are all officers being held liable for one person's actions

- Again, I ask why this only applies to the police profession and not others

Section 40 Military Designed Equipment

- What is the reason for prohibiting the buying and use of military equipment? Citizens have military style equipment which requires the police to have similar equipment to defend themselves and protect the public.
- Allowing police departments to obtain military style equipment from the military decreases the cost to the tax payers since police departments have a lower cost when purchased from the military

Please feel free to reach out to me to discuss my concerns further.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Jones
Town of Cromwell Police Officer