

**Don Lowe**  
First Selectman

dlowe@townofshermanct.org



9 Route 39 North  
P. O. Box 39  
Sherman, CT 06784

(860) 355-1139  
Fax (860) 355-6943

**TOWN OF SHERMAN CONNECTICUT  
MALLORY TOWN HALL**

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Thursday, July 16, 2020

Regarding: Testimony on Draft LCO #3471

Dear Judiciary Committee,

It is understandable in light of high-profile and well publicized abuses by a few police officers that you are working on reform and accountability for Connecticut police officers. But many parts of Bill 3471 are troublesome and just plain lacking in good sense. The bill is not a solution and, in fact, exacerbates the very problems that we are trying to solve and threatens the morale of this critical workforce. Take notice of the following:

**SS41 (and SS12 related)** Allowing the public the opportunity to individually sue a police officer is wrong-headed. An individual can already bring civil suit against the department (covered by the state or Town that the police officer works for) in the event he or she is wronged. To extend that to the individual police officer is a morale-buster and likely to make officers much more reticent to respond. I wouldn't blame them. The plaintiff in cases like that -- even in the most frivolous case -- has many advantages in the court system and it's easy to see an individual officer straddled in the middle of dozens of these kinds of cases. Please drop this part of the bill.

**SS40:** The backlash against police using military equipment has been a provocative media subject but please make this clear if you are going to instate this. Military equipment includes helmets, gas masks, body armor, helicopters, and even in terms of weaponry, I think it's important that police can at least keep equal to the weaponry that they often face from oppositional behavior.

**SS38 and 39:** This is unnecessary as far as the State Police are concerned. The State Police do not have quotas.

**SS29:** Again, this is a provocative issue, but what you are trying to pass here is murky and you need to clarify. "Factors to consider"....this no doubt means protocols and procedures and steps before action is taken. It sounds good, but consider a Sandy Hook situation or an imminent hostage murder suicide situation. You are asking officers to go through a set of protocols before taking necessary action? Please think about this.

**SS21 & 22:** A tremendous amount of crime is prevented by asking a suspicious individual if his or her car can be searched. If permission is granted, how is this a violation of someone's rights and why would you want to take this crime fighting tool away from our police?

I tried to keep this brief and plain. I do worry that this bill is a morale breaker for our police -- just at a time when we need them the most. We need strong, smart, motivated candidates for police work and this bill discourages that caliber of person into performing this work and getting into this line of work. I wish you'd drop this entire effort and focus and fund the concepts of community policing. It works.

Thank you,

Don Lowe -- First Selectman of Sherman CT

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