

I wish to express my serious concern about legislation being proposed in the CT State Legislature which I believe will greatly impede our police officers' ability to protect, not only CT citizens, but officers themselves. These proposed measures will also make recruitment of new officers and the retention of currently employed ones extremely difficult.

Specifically the elimination of qualified immunity is ill conceived and will cause officers to either not act when they should or hesitate when time is critical putting themselves and CT citizens at risk. The current law already addresses willful and wanton conduct and that language is sufficient enough to guard against improper police behavior.

Another area of concern is the elimination of the use of a choke hold except to prevent death. Anyone who has ever been in a struggle with a combative suspect knows that a hard and fast rule like this one isn't practical. These struggles don't have "referees" and the line between protecting your life and possible abuse is a fine one. It should not be judged without consideration for the officer's state of mind.

Next, the differentiation between minor and priority traffic stops isn't logical at all unless 1. you're going to assign DMV Inspectors to each city/town in the State to enforce minor offenses or 2. You eliminate minor offenses from the law altogether. If the legislature believes these laws aren't important enough to enforce for public safety, then get rid of them. Be prepared however for a rise in motor vehicle accidents and the injuries/ deaths associated with them.

Local police departments can no longer purchase military type equipment or night vision devices? Maybe I missed something but have hostage situations, school shootings, off road & water rescues ceased to occur in Connecticut? Does criminal activity end when the sun goes down? How are police officers supposed to conduct nighttime surveillance or monitor criminal behavior in their communities? These are tools which are necessary to do the job we ask our officers to do.

These are but a few of some of the legislative reactions to recent occurrences in our country which unfortunately are not well thought out.

Should the police be held accountable for their actions? Absolutely. Should all citizens be treated fairly without prejudice? Absolutely. Should training and recruitment be sensitive to the times and a reflection of the community? Absolutely. But any changes must be done in a thoughtful manner taking into account their long term consequences and ramifications.

Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns.

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