



# STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

900 Longbrook Avenue • Stratford, Connecticut 06614-5099

(203) 385-4110 • Fax: (203) 385-4019

**Joseph D. McNeil**  
*Chief of Police*

**John D. Popik**  
*Deputy Chief*

Judiciary Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
300 Capitol Avenue, Suite 5100  
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Testimony Regarding Draft LCO #3471- An Act Concerning Police Accountability

Dear Committee Members:

I have been in law enforcement for over 26 years. I have seen the best and the worst of this career and have learned from every incident. Police Officers are an integral part of their communities. Our community success is a police agency success. We work hand in hand to better our communities and provide safety and security to our citizens.

We can all acknowledge that we have seen a break down in law and order in our state and nation. Individuals who prey on our law abiding residents are quick to deflect responsibilities for their actions. Some will even blame the victim or law enforcement for trying to bring justice to the families. However, we must create an avenue for redemption and a pathway for successful reintegration into society. We have to stand together and rise up for the safety of our communities.

An Act Concerning Police Accountability is flawed and hinders police investigations and will allow violent offenders freedom to prey on the hard working people of this state. Section 29 of the proposed bill requires a police officer to exhaust all reasonable alternatives prior to the use of deadly force. What is exactly reasonable when you are in a life and death struggle and have to make a split second decision to defend yourself or a third person? An officer would be placed in extreme peril trying to rationalize what is a reasonable alternative.

Even more troubling is the attack on qualified immunity, the very protection that affords law enforcement the ability to do their job. Law enforcement jobs are very stressful today and add to that the ever shifting political winds will make recruitment impossible.





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If the goal is to make Connecticut less safe, then you are firmly on the right path. We have seen youths on bicycles effectively shut down Interstate 91, all-terrain vehicles terrorize our residents and good people afraid in their own community.

Instead of holding people accountable for their actions, your answer is to undermine the very fabric that holds it all together. Public safety and to live freely without fear is a right. The people that vote for this bill should be held accountable by the many victims it will create.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. McNeil", written over a horizontal line.

Chief Joseph McNeil  
Stratford Police Department

