

Police Accountability Draft. Comments by Meg Bloom constituent New Haven, Ct.
LCO3471

I strongly support LCO#3471 draft for police accountability and appreciate your hard work. It is crucial that there be passage of the bill.

I have been concerned with social justice my whole life, and a resident of New Haven since 1967.

In my career as a social worker, I worked in the New Haven Schools, 2 Ct. domestic violence programs, in a community Health Clinic, and a Mental Health clinic, in the projects, and various other low income neighborhoods. I feel keenly aware of the injustices to black and brown people in general, and particularly, to adolescents that have been impacted in various ways by problematic policing. I have also experienced the impact of police discrimination on my teenage sons and their friends, on the youth I have worked with, and individuals and families from low income neighborhoods, different ethnic groups, and people with mental health issues.

Thus my eagerness for this bill to pass, not as a panacea to social injustice and racist policing, but at least as a much needed attempt to remedy some of the current problems that have policing so out of control.

There are some general issues that I am concerned need to change so the language becomes stronger and clearer. This especially appears as "may" or shall- regarding CRB boards, providing records,

There should be NO use of chokes holds.

And the subjectivity regarding the decision to use deadly force needs to be worded and monitored very carefully. Otherwise this leaves the door open for things to continue as is, with no impact on accountability in any kind of use of deadly force. As stated, it can always be "justified," unless the documentation, witnessing, and followup to such a situation is carefully monitored, has forceful oversight, etc. This section is crucial!

There needs to be a different level of police accountability and transparency. CRBs need to be up and functioning as a requirement, not a suggestion or an allowance. , CRBs need subpoena power, not just "may". They also need to be accountable to the community they serve, not the police department.

There should be a reallocation or shifting of some of financial resources to use social workers, or others outside the police department.

Places where there should be no guns. There should not be a reason for the use of guns in traffic stops. Traffic Stops should be well documented, and not include searches.

There should be no police break-ins that occur without warning.

Social workers should not be part of the police department, but be independent .

There should not be policing(or guns) in schools except as a last recourse where there is a declared emergency. And an officer can be called in.
There should not be policing in mental health settings.

Training needs to be required, substantial, and ongoing, especially regarding cultural competence and de-escalation.

Evaluations of police must be required, and occur much more frequently than every 5 years.

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Corrections oversight must be written into this bill, and specifics must be stated and required.

Thank you for your care and consideration.

I am also concerned, overall, that a lot of the recommendations in the bill are just that, recommendations where there is no force behind the Language which would change the policing culture. The language needs to be more forceful and binding.

Section on Duty to intervene crucial.