

Sir I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the police reform bill being proposed this week. I am a New Haven police officer and have served for 14yrs as a patrol officer. While I understand the call by some to want to reform certain aspects of policing nationwide, I find many of the proposed items on this bill to be detrimental to police in this state. Taking things away like qualified immunity from police and requiring them to obtain their own insurance would only cause officers to refrain from wanting to do any type of police work that could possibly put them at risk in their personal lives. Officers need to know that doing their job properly will not result in lawsuits against them by persons who have nothing to lose in a society that is already overly litigious as it is. I further can not understand why anyone would want a study done to determine whether or not officers can be allowed to work extra duty. Extra duty is a vital part of many officers income and has no bearing on what an officer does when he/she is on their normal work schedule. This feels like nothing more than a punitive act against officers from a political body that wants to appease a small angry portion of the population with a very loud voice that resents law enforcement in all aspects.

We have already seen nationwide and in my city in particular the surge in crime which can directly, in part, be correlated to the lack of proactive work being done. Officers can only do their jobs proactively when they are confident that they will be supported by their government and not hung out to dry in the event that an incident may not have the outcome the public does not like without understanding the nature of the job or all the facts. There are examples in Atlanta of officers losing everything while doing their job because of a knee jerk reaction to appease a mob and now the city is contemplating bringing in the national guard to help with the crime due to officers standing down for fear of the same actions against them. If this bill passes as is not only will officers begin to quit or take early retirements, the ability to recruit new officers will be severely impacted.

Policing is not done in a vacuum and cannot be put under such rigid guidelines to judge an officer's actions in situations that are fluid, volatile, and varying from incident to incident. This bill will make the most competent of officers second guess every action they take in a potential life or death situation and will result in more officer injuries and or deaths. While policing is not always perfect the fact remains that in this country there are over 300 million police interactions every year with the public and on average 1000 deaths related to officers discharging their weapons, with 95% of those being armed subjects. Those are numbers directly taken from national crime stats of 2019 and show that only .0000027% of all police interaction result in a shooting. While any unlawful shooting of a citizen is something to be corrected and strived to eliminate, these numbers show that sweeping reforms and dramatic changes to officers' sense of security in their livelihood is a gross overreaction and will only result in more crime and dysfunctional law enforcement agency's everywhere. Thank you for your time and please take these sentiments and concerns with you this week for this vote. Respectfully, Officer Sal Ricci

111 Arlington St, West Haven