

Good Morning, my name is Robert Davis and I am a police sergeant for the Waterbury Police Department. I have been employed with the department for the last 13 years. I was born and raised in the city and have seen several changes to law enforcement and communities, some for the better and some for the worst. In many cases some of the worst outcomes have been the result of botched or rushed decision making. In the case of this proposed bill, we may be facing similar repeated bad practices. As I read through the bill I observed several positives and ideas to move toward transparent / community involved / community orientated police departments statewide, but I also see some concerning proposals also. I believe that more thought should be put into the process of this current bill being that the decision being made will affect the future of ALL lives. I understand the urgency and need for change, along with the need to promote and gain equality, as well as an end to police brutality is necessary. For me and my co-workers, we support action toward those individuals who violate and are responsible for these actions. We as police stand by those hurt, grieving and want change. The solution or steps toward the common goal and achievement should not be rushed to appease some, but well thought out to satisfy all or most. In this bill there are proposals that do not represent the voice of officers, who are people too and are vested in the process of reform. This has been proven through their oath to protect, serve and educate their respected communities. The disgusting actions of a few have, drowned out the voice of many in this profession who want positive change and transparency.

Some of the positives in this bill include the request / need for body cameras, training, and improvement of minority recruitment as well as the periodic mental health checks for officers. All important to moving forward through these times.

One of the biggest concerns would be the topic involving the removal of qualified immunity. I understand most people believe this is protection for bad officers, but I disagree for the masses of good officers. To take away qualified immunity is a clear display of not caring for and lack of support for our good officer and their safety, as well as the public. In many, not all cases officers can make mistakes while acting under good intention to save / help or assist someone. Does that warrant them losing everything? Inheriting financial burdens from debatable accusations or incidents, emotional stress,

loss of life, their family's lives and etc. All for attempting to help the public and community? That can't be fair and suggesting so, would be unrealistic.

Such proposal of no qualified immunity leaves the public in a vulnerable and unacceptable position. Speaking with officers openly, allows me to hear they would be more hesitant and less confident when policing. Officer's lack of doing would have a negative impact on our inner cities and would promote chaos and anarchy in the communities that you and I represent. Many have work continuously to improve the climate of our communities. Scared non-working officers would be a tremendous set back. That is unfair to all citizens, because in most cases we all work hard to achieve peace. The lack of doing will lead to the following questions that have always been answered by law enforcement on a daily basis. Should I call the police? Are they going to come? And what can they really do? Answers that have never as law enforcement officers been hesitated to answer or second guess.

I state this as officers across the country continue to be killed / hurt in the line of duty. I state this point lastly, because we as officers are constantly thought of last and heard from last. Many officers today are operating under fear of being judged and scrutinized by public perception and media influence for just doing their job. Due to this fear officers are not using the trained methods to effectively do their job, which can result in fatal occurrences. This is an unacceptable loss for any human being. We accept what comes with this job, but shouldn't have to inherit further dangers / scrutiny at the hand of a few those who also represent us. How could a citizen rely on an officers, which cannot / will not do his or her job effectively and efficiently?

I believe we can all agree that the majority of our citizens want police in our communities, but would like government and lawmakers to revisit to their roles and responsibilities. Lack of qualified immunity would result in frivolous lawsuits, claims, hostile incident baiting of law enforcement. All for which the community, officers and their families would suffer the repercussions. Whether that is through monetary amounts, emotional effects, loss of trust or etc. Eliminating qualified immunity would led to poor policing, which by the

Waterbury Police Departments standard is unacceptable. Please consider all voices and lives before approving a bill that affects everyone.