

Response To the Police Accountability

As President of the Southington Police Department's Union I have heard from all of my fellow Officers about the support and gratitude that the Southington residents have expressed to us during these turbulent times. It's obvious to me the silent majority who live in Southington as well as surrounding Towns overwhelmingly support their Police Departments, and want to live in communities where they feel safe and protected.

All of my fellow Officers agree that what took place in Minneapolis is truly appalling and unacceptable, however the proposed Police Accountability Bill is an attack on Police officers here in Connecticut. While our Officers are not opposed to change, we need to identify issues that are pertinent in Connecticut. I am a firm believer that any changes made are only after extensive dialogue and discussions from everyone involved. To make changes hastily based on emotions from a truly tragic incident is not prudent and extremely reckless. To vilify Police officers in Connecticut for a tragic incident in Minnesota is not fair either. Police officers are integral parts of their communities; we shop at local grocery stores and eat at local restaurants, we are parents, coaches, volunteers and role models within our communities not the evil monsters portrayed by the media. Southington Police officers want to keep the community safe and get to go home to their families at the end of their shift.

I feel the residents of the Town of Southington are similar to most of the residents in other Connecticut towns who appreciate and support their local Police Departments. These legislators need to speak up on behalf of the silent majority and represent their constituent's best interest instead of simply going along with a reckless Police Accountability Bill. The Accountability Bill has several issues we support, however it contains numerous parts that are going to cause good

Officers to leave the profession and at the same time deter quality individuals from pursuing a Law Enforcement career.

In closing, we are asking all elected officials to listen to the residents of their communities who voted them into office. On behalf of the Southington Police Union, I would also like to thank the members of our community for their unwavering and tremendous support during these difficult times.

Respectfully,

Sgt. Stephen Salerno

President: Southington Police Union