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Judiciary Committee Public Hearing, July 17, 2020
Regarding Bills: Draft LCO 3471 AAC Police Accountability

Co-Chairs Senator Winfield and Representative Stafstrom, Ranking Members Representative Reimbass and Senator Kissel, and other distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Subira Gordon and I am Executive Director of ConnCAN (the Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now).

I am here today to testify in support of Draft LCO 3471 AAC Police Accountability.

I commend the leadership of this committee for confronting some of the most pressing issues of our time with policy solutions that address a long history of inequity in policing.

ConnCAN has historically focused on issues that concern educational equity in our state. I am also here today as a black woman and the mother of black children, all of whom are concerned over the fact that communities that look like ours are being over policed and under-resourced.

Our work builds students up to elevate their dreams and break barriers, dreams which are all too often taken away because of the unchecked power of police forces that criminalize the behaviour of black and brown children. These patterns lead to in school arrests for school policy violations which then lead to a longer life of involvement with law enforcement. A youth who has an encounter with the police while in school is more likely to be incarcerated as an adult.

While this bill does not address police officers in schools, it does address accountability in a system that for too long has wielded its power over communities and taken black and brown lives with no recourse. My community deserves to be served and protected like any other.

We at ConnCAN stand ready to be a part of any conversation that takes that further step of investing in social workers and school counselors, rather than resource officers because we believe that schools should be a place of learning, and therefore there should be no police.

Thank you for your time today.

About ConnCAN: *ConnCAN is leading a movement to improve education outcomes for Connecticut's kids. We bring advocates, policymakers, parents and educators together to change the system and give all kids access to the great public schools they deserve. Learn more at conncan.org.*