

I do not support LCO #3471 in its current form. My objections mainly focus on Articles 29 and 30.

- * The multiple reviews and reports following police incidents involving force may or may not create an accurate understanding of the events of a crime scene, since (1) the activity at crime scenes can change so quickly that essential aspects of the transition from one key event to the next may be unreported, misreported, or misremembered, and since (2) it is hard for many people involved in a crime scene to maintain an objective point of view either during or after the interaction with police.

- * Those same reviews do not specify the required background of each reviewer or level of reviewers. Thus police could be subject to review by people who have little knowledge of the alternatives that might have been available at any point in the incident.

- * Generalities like "****any*** conduct of the peace officer ... led to an increased risk of an occurrence of the situation" (29c2) are far too broad to be meaningful or useful.

- * The provision that "a peace officer ... is justified in using deadly physical force... only when ... he ... has exhausted ***all*** reasonable alternatives" is also too general since it takes no account of the time scales involved in force decisions, and fails to specify how and how often police will receive thorough training in what are "all" the reasonable alternatives.

- * The fact that the law specifies that any officer who witnesses, ***or is otherwise aware of***, some other officer using excessive force, must report that, opens up the possibility that an entire police department could easily get bogged down in endless self-investigations as a result of rumor, hearsay, or simply misunderstood or misheard communications.

I believe most interactions between citizens and police, where a crime is involved, are complicated, unpredictable, and often rapidly changing events, which may or may not involve many people each of whom may have a different perspective on what is happening at any moment. Thus legislation which protects both police and citizens must be written with extreme care.

This legislation looks hurried and ill-considered, and I would feel less safe, not more safe, as a result of its passage.

Please take the time to carry out an extensive review of each aspect of this law, and to pass parts of the bill incrementally.

Yours truly,
Susan Kleinmann
Ridgefield, CT