

Good evening,

The Bill being considered is in draft form. I am totally in favor of this Bipartisan process. I am providing my perspectives on the circumstances that have surrounded us and are bearing down on us from different directions but tragically the brunt of the burden and deadly consequences are making the lives of the dispossessed and disadvantaged even more fraught and intolerable than ever before in the face of the economic and health consequences of the Pandemic for members of BIPOC [Black , Indigenous and people of Color] communities as well as the LGBTQ+ communities across all Zip codes.

I will provide specific comments on particular recommendations that are being considered in the Legislative process to draft a final version of a Police Accountability Bill that can enacted and signed into a Law that we can all live exercising our Individual Liberty without any let or hindrance, be guaranteed equal Justice under the law which advances the public welfare and safety as well as comity and amity and thus shall the Constitution State be the envy of others and the pride of our citizens, our friends and neighbors in every neighborhood regardless of the Zip Code.

“Give birth again to a dream”

once we can put our 400-year-old nightmare behind us finally.

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Testimony on Draft LCO #3471” in the subject line

Sharing my Thoughts on Police Accountability Draft Bill

III. Key Highlights from the 65 Page Bi Partisan Draft Police Accountability Bill

I gather these are among the high lights of the Draft Police Accountability Bill. These are of substantial interest to me and urge you to find a way of drafting the final version to include these important potentially transformative provisions. I have made notations in each of the Items that reflects my interests and concerns.

- The Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST), which currently provides certification and trainings for only some police officers in Connecticut, will be reconstituted.[THIS IS A MUST, PLEASE] Current membership will end on December 31, 2020, and there will be new criteria for appointments, including justice-impacted persons be members and different size towns be represented. Six appointments to the POST will be made by legislative leaders. If a member misses 50% or more of meetings in a calendar year, they will lose their seat. [Accountability must start at the top]

- POST will issue an annual report on minority recruitment efforts at local police departments. The data must be available on an ongoing basis not just annualized basis to the Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force.
- All officers must become POST certified; periodic mental health screenings will be required at a police chief's discretion where there is cause; a screening must be conducted no less than every five years and when an officer changes departments; uniformed officers must have their name and badge number readily visible on their outer garment; individuals providing police training at police departments or at the academy must be certified in their field of expertise. This absolutely CRITICAL.
- POST will develop a model crowd control policy; will require implicit bias training; and disciplinary records of officers will be subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. This must be retained in the final draft
- POST will have the ability to conduct hearings and make determinations to suspend, censor, or decertify an officer. POST can make these determinations when an officer has engaged in conduct that undermines public confidence in law enforcement or when an officer uses excess or unjustifiable force. If an officer is de-certified by POST, they cannot be employed as a security guard. The fact the Police Officer has been decertified must be posted on a Data base – Police Accountability Data Base PADB fashioned along the lines of the National Practitioner data Base that keeps track of the Sanctions imposed against Physicians and Licensed Medical Care providers. [NPDB] THIS IS A MUST add provision in the Final draft
- Under the new bill, cities and towns will have the ability to appoint citizen review boards and extend subpoena power to those review boards through local legislative bodies.
- Local police departments will review the need to engage more social worker-based responses, either with an officer or by themselves.[Section 18 of the Draft Bill must include a key role for Social Workers.]
- Body and dashboard cameras will be mandatory for officers interacting with public; this mandate will include funding for storage and allow the state Office of Policy and Management the ability to set conditions for grant funding. It is incumbent on this Bill to ensure a funding stream to achieve this critical goal
- Quotas for pedestrian stops are banned, with such quotas already banned on traffic stops.
- Consent searches of vehicles will be banned unless there is probable cause.

- An **objectively reasonable standard will** be required for a Police Officer to use deadly force, meaning that an officer has exhausted all reasonable alternatives, that the force creates no significant risk of injury to a third party, and that such use of force is necessary. All these practical criteria must be met based on Body Camera and other sources of information
- **No tactic to restrain blood flow to the head, including chokeholds and strangleholds, can be used unless it's deemed necessary to save the life of oneself or someone else.**
- **Officers must intervene and report excessive use of deadly force; whistleblower protections will be provided to those who do. Just as Mandatory reporters among Health Care Professionals are appropriately sanctioned by the State. Police Officers who don't report such malfeasance must be sanctioned appropriately. These requirements must be spelled out/**
- **The Bill creates an independent Office of the Inspector General (IG), which will be housed under the Office of the Chief State's Attorney's Division of Criminal Justice. Use of force investigations would be conducted by the IG with prosecutorial authority. The IG would be nominated by the Chief State's Attorney with a public hearing required before the Judiciary Committee and confirmation by the legislature to a four-year term. The IG can refer police officers to POST for de-certification. These two recommendations must be in the Final Bill**
- **Please strengthen this provision: The Bill implements increased penalties for making a false police report based on race, gender, national origin, or sexual identity, and it creates cause of action for civil rights violations. [People are on the record using 911 calls to bring a world of pain to encumber people of color who may have done something perfectly legal to raise their ire.VM]**
- **The Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force's work will continue, focused on how to increase minority police officer recruitment, whether police officers should carry professional liability insurance, and whether to ban no-knock warrants. This is Imperative. We cannot clearly make these decisions without collecting data on these parameters and its outcomes.**
- **Finally, please enact a strong Police Accountability Bill that must include the language on social workers in Section 18 of the draft Police Accountability Bill in the Final draft Bill that is voted and sent off to Governor Lamont.**

I welcome your responses.

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