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Judiciary Committee
February 22, 2021
Zoom 10:00AM

Testimony on House Bill 6462
An Act Concerning Use of Force By a Peace Officer

Chairman Winfield, Chairman Stafstrom, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee, I am here to testify on House Bill 6462, *An Act Concerning Use of Force By a Peace Officer*. For the transcript, my name is Cathy Osten and I represent the 19th Senate District, which includes the towns of Columbia, Franklin, Hebron, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Marlborough, Montville, Norwich, and Sprague.

As you know, I submitted a bill, Senate Bill 828, *An Act Concerning Changes To Public Act 20-1 Of The July Special Session, Also Known As The Police Accountability Act*, which included a number of changes to last summer's Police Accountability law. Among Senate Bill 828's changes include:

- That the effective dates of provisions of the general statutes amended or enacted by public act 20-1 of the July special session be changed to June 2022. Such a change will permit municipal departments with sufficient time to prepare for the changes outlined in PA 20-1 of the July special session.
- That the general statutes be amended to (A) require joint Judiciary and Public Safety committee meetings annually to discuss Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) recommendations to ensure concurrence with legislative intent; and (B) require a review of any proposed legislative changes regarding any piece of public act 20-1 of the July special session;
- To require use of force policy for peace officers that incorporates a single, standardized training curriculum to include lesson plans and presentation material regarding all aspects of this policy for the purposes of in-service or review training and that such training be reviewed to remove redundant training modules and bring training hours to forty in a

calendar year; and to require that such training be delivered by a POST-certified use of force instructor;

- To enable municipal police departments to elect to offer additional training in any area of this policy, provided such training may not supplant any portion of the POST-approved training module; and to require that any additional training offered must be delivered by a POST-certified use of force instructor using a POST-approved lesson plan;
- To require each municipal department to ensure that every peace officer be bound by the use of force policy and completes all required POST use of force training prior to the policy coming into effect, and thereafter, the department shall ensure that every officer completes the POST recertification training module no less than once annually.
- That title 18 of the general statutes be amended to require that the use of force policy for correctional custody staff incorporates and clarifies the duty to intervene and that the Department of Correction shall train all staff on this policy prior to its implementation.
- That departments be reimbursed for the initial training for the new use of force policy using available bonding dollars provided for workforce development and enacted and authorized as part of public act 20-1.
- That section 7-291e of the general statutes be amended to provide that officers who are determined to need treatment following a behavioral health assessment are offered such treatment and are then given a reassessment followed by treatment, if necessary, and then if following further reassessment it is determined that such officer is unable to perform his or her duties, such officer be offered disability retirement.
- That sections 54-33b and 54-33o of the general statutes be amended to provide that a search may proceed after consent is properly given and recorded and that a vehicle may be searched prior to being towed away from the scene.
- That chapter 886 of the general statutes be amended to make certain changes including for the provision of a mechanism to ensure proper staffing at the Office of the Inspector General, that the mechanism provide for a greater pool of applicants to fulfil the needs of the office, that an Inspector General be successfully appointed and that all staffing needs of the office are met.

I strongly urge the committee to adopt substitute language to House Bill 6462 with the changes outlined above. Taken together, these practical and systematic measures only strengthen the application of existing law and will have a profound impact on enhancing police training and standardized practices.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 6462. I look forward to working with the leadership and members of this committee on this bill's passage.