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Letter to the CT Task Force on making further recommendations to the police accountability law.

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Let me start off with a message for all the legislators who voted for the bill and for Governor Lamont who signed it into law. The vast majority of police officers in Connecticut feel this is not a police reform law but an anti-police law. We feel betrayed and that we are being punished for the actions of others, from other states! There was no problem with policing in Connecticut, and to say there was is a lie! There are so many things wrong with this law.

Some of the wording, indeed whole sections of this law are problematic and need to be revisited. We keep hearing the qualified immunity section of the law changes nothing. Really, then why was it necessary? It absolutely changes the protection that police officers MUST have from frivolous lawsuits. Remember, people sue the police even when the officers are right, hoping for a quick settlement. This section alone will cause many good law enforcement officers to leave the profession and qualified candidates will not apply. This section must be removed. Qualified immunity under federal law DOES NOT, and never has protected bad behavior. It protects good people, who make honest mistakes from being ruined professionally and financially. My prediction for what the immunity section will cause is this:

Officers will hesitate and second guess themselves now, which is tactically dangerous. Many will exercise "tactful blindness and tactful deafness" rather than be proactive. Crime is going to rise, it already

has. If you don't believe that has to do with police hesitating and being discouraged, you're delusional.

Law enforcement has already been stripped of tools that gave criminals a free pass. One glaring example is that motorists routinely run from police now, knowing officers will not pursue. This is a complicated issue, but placing a moratorium on vehicular pursuits is not the answer. But that is exactly what the restrictive nature of the uniform pursuit policy has done. Officers will not attempt to stop ANY vehicles that run now because the risk of criminal and civil penalties is too high. That's dangerous to the public and good for the criminals, who know police don't chase anymore in Connecticut. The fleeing motorist/criminal bears no more responsibility, only the officer does.

There is no ability to request consent searches any longer. What is the reason for this except to protect criminals? For years, consent searches have taken guns and drugs off the streets. This section does not preserve citizen's rights, it protects criminals. Was that the goal?

The use of force section changes how a person may be forcibly taken into custody. If that section is to be taken literally then how is an officer going to arrest a person his/her size or larger who is actively fighting and trying not only to get away, but to hurt the officer. This isn't "Law and Order" where all the criminals comply and come quietly. In the real-world people do not want to be arrested and they fight! Fighting with the police is a felony for a reason, well at least for now. Hopefully I'll be retired when it becomes an infraction. Hold the criminal accountable for not complying with the officer, not the officer accountable because the criminal was fighting with him or her.

This law disregards over forty years of Connecticut and Federal Supreme Court rulings. I believe it is mostly unconstitutional and should

and will be challenged. The whopping cost of the unfunded mandates alone has to be a record!

The bill was not properly vetted. It was not examined by each committee that should have done so. There was no real public debate. This was forced upon Connecticut residents and law enforcement officers in record time using COVID-19 as the excuse for the deviation from the normal process. This was an unscrupulous move the authors planned and executed because they knew it would never have passed as is, if it was properly vetted. This is primarily anti-police legislation that disregards other sections of the general statutes and court rulings. P.O.S.T. is supposed to be making policy on police practices and behavior, not a few select members of the general assembly who clearly know nothing about policing and have never done it!

Scrap this dangerous law and replace it with one that makes sense and is fair to the police, but still makes us better. One that is properly vetted and analyzed by the required committees. One that does not contain sections that handcuff the police to the point of making it more unnecessarily dangerous for them. One that does not make officers uncertain and afraid to do their jobs. Ultimately it is the citizens of Connecticut whose quality of life and financial stability will suffer from this debacle and it is they you will have to answer to. Are the people of Connecticut going to continue to get the policing they demand and deserve? With this law, as it is written, they will not. It was a dangerously diabolical, anti-police undertaking which surveys have shown a vast majority of Connecticut residents oppose. This law puts people at risk and protects criminals. It's that simple.

Clearly Hartford has forgotten, “ Government **OF** the people, **BY** the people, **FOR** the people. [This means all the people.](#)”

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