

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sergeant Nicholas D. Galluzzo and I am an 18 year veteran of the Hull Police department. During my tenure I have seen the “Police” world evolve and in many cases not for the better. Police Departments have been saddled with more paperwork, more societal issues to handle, many of which we are not properly trained to handle, law changes that have made our jobs more difficult, more budget cuts and severe staffing and training issues that have occurred as a result. One other trend that I have noticed in my time is that things are very slow to change in the “Police” world, but when they do change the pendulum swings completely to the opposite direction usually in a knee jerk reaction to some tragedy or misconduct. These types of changes rarely come with the proper training to empower us as Police Officers to efficiently handle the new changes and responsibilities that are basically just dropped on us.

Please understand that I do support certain aspects of reform bill S2820 because I believe there is always room for improvement and growth for Police departments. Positive and meaningful improvements will translate to a better service to our communities which will result in a better quality of life. Having said that, there are certain elements of S2820 that make no sense and will only hurt the Police and the communities we serve.

In this day and age where the actions of the very small minority seem to dictate the punishment of the vast majority we need to step back from a knee jerk type of reaction that can be destructive. Instead, we need to work side by side with our communities to hear their voices, and let them hear ours as well so we can reach a realistic conclusion that will be beneficially constructive to all parties. The majority of people who have never been employed in law enforcement, or have a family member or close friend in law enforcement or been in the military do not and cannot understand the rigors and high requirements of doing the job. Many of those people form their opinions of their Police Officers and Officer in general based on the mostly negative messages fed to them on a daily basis by the press. Let’s take a moment to be honest, how often do you see stories in the news of the actions of a bad Police Officer versus how many times you see the actions and heroism of the majority of good Police Officers. Every profession from the most menial to the most prestigious has its share of bad apples, but they are the minority, not the majority. Police Officers are “blanket” judged through bad press that seems to dominate any news of Police Officers even though nobody dislikes a bad Officer more than a good Officer.

If you choose to vote for passage of reform bill S2820 then you will be voting to hurt the majority. It’s already bad enough that most departments, especially smaller towns, are suffering from razor thin or insufficient budgets and staffing, but to add to that the possibilities of being sued for anything and everything, especially if you did your job by the book and according to department policy will further reduce the number of qualified and sought after candidates applying for the job. I have already seen a steep decline in the number of people taking the civil service exam over the last ten years. Instead of seeing two thousand or more people seeking a

career as a Police Officer we are seeing only a few hundred people showing up for the civil service exam. The main reasons for that are the constant bad perception of us created by the main stream media, everyone constantly filming us with their cell phones and posting to social media trying to make us look bad, attempts to take away details, incentives and pensions and the world generally becoming a more violent place with more and more cases of Police Officers being targeted and killed. Additionally with many Police departments being understaffed Officers are being forced to work overtime shifts that they don't want and in many cases force them to miss important family time and scramble to arrange care for their children.

Passing reform bill S2820 will only further exacerbate the situation and decrease the pool of qualified and sought after candidates even further to the point where we will see a far lesser quality of candidate, many of whom will not be fit for the profession but will be hired because of the deficit created by this knee jerk reaction of a reform.

If you want the opportunity to make real and effective reform to Policing now is the time. Public support is high but common sense is not. Taking away qualified immunity and due process is not going to stop the bad apples it will only hurt the good majority and create a huge financial burden that many departments will not be able to function with. This in turn will then trickle down to the quality of service to our communities and in turn to their quality of life.

The first victim of budget cuts is always training, and now more than ever what we as Police Officers need is more training. Instead of rushing this bill through just to say, "Look how quickly we acted", I implore you to re-read the bill and take a common sense approach that will be far more effective than this anti-Police piece of legislation. Police Officers don't need to be hindered any further, we need to be properly funded, properly staffed and properly trained with the protections we have in place now to minimize frivolous law suits and the precious time and money that they waste.

I can honestly tell you that morale is at an all time low as many Officers feel as though the individual and his contributions no longer matter; we are just bodies to fill spots in a profession that is now being run more like a business than a Police department. Real change will only come through common sense and cooperation, not through hatred, bashing and a one sided argument made without due process. Please take the time to pause and re-think what you may be about to do and ask yourselves, would these types of drastic and dangerous changes seem fair at your employment?

Respectfully submitted,

Sergeant Nicholas D. Galluzzo

Hull Police Department

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