



Keeping the Commonwealth's air, water, environment, health & infrastructure safe.

JOSEPH DORANT, PRESIDENT
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MICHAEL GALVIN, TREASURER

July 17, 2020

Representative Aaron Michelewitz, Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Representative Claire D. Cronin, Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary

Dear Chair Michelewitz and Chair Cronin:

As President of the Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists (MOSES), an employee organization representing 3,400 scientists and engineers across the Commonwealth, I submit this testimony regarding SB 2820, *An Act to reform police standards and shift resources to build a more equitable, fair and just commonwealth that values Black lives and communities of color*. MOSES represents thousands of dedicated public servants employed at various state agencies across the Commonwealth. Our talented membership includes construction and civil engineers at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), environmental analysts and hazardous materials team members at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), epidemiologists at the Department of Public Health (DPH), building and engineering inspectors at the Division of Professional Licensure (DPL) and Department of Fire Safety (DFS), as well as Forensic Scientists at the State Police Crime Lab. Regardless of their specific job duties, all MOSES members share a common commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all who live in Massachusetts.

While we fully support changes to improve policing procedures and combat discrimination in the Commonwealth, we have serious concerns with the changes included in this bill that open the door to onerous risks to and burdens upon public employees performing their duties in good faith. The specific section we find troublesome is Section 10, which lowers the threshold for qualified immunity for not just law enforcement but ALL public employees. We want to ensure that our members can perform their job functions soundly without the possibility of being liable in civil court when acting within their reasonable understanding of the law.

We as an organization stand strongly for a legislative package that brings thoughtful and meaningful reform to address police misconduct and racial injustice in the Commonwealth. However, we do not support reducing aspects of qualified immunity to public employees and it is our hope that this section

will not be part of the final piece of legislation. The proposed changes in the current bill will open the door to unforeseen issues and will cause greater cost to the Commonwealth and its citizens in the long run. Please reach out to Steven Smalley, Legislative Director for MOSES, at (617) 367-2727 or ssmalley@moses-ma.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Dorant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" being more prominent than the last name "Dorant".

Joe Dorant, President
Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists