

A Letter regarding Bill S2820

I, Brendan E. Gahagan, as a member of The Topsfield Police Department, am writing to express that I am opposed to Massachusetts Senate Bill (S2820). If passed, this bill would prohibit officers from effectively executing their duty each day.

The main areas of concern, among others, are the following:

Due Process: Under the law, Police officers deserve the same due process that are given to citizens and have been in place for years. All law enforcement employees deserve the right to an appeal, the same right given to other public servants.

Qualified Immunity: Contrary to what most think, qualified immunity does not protect bad police officers. What it does is keep officers, acting in good faith while making split second decisions, out of frivolous lawsuits that not only waste time, but millions of tax - payer dollars. All officers are bound to policy and procedures within their department and are subject to internal investigations.

Police Officer Standards Accreditation Committee: People have the right to be judged by their peers. It is difficult for any person to judge situations which they are not familiar with, or have never been involved in. In order to properly review Police conduct one must understand the role of being a police officer. Being tasked with regulating police action, including termination should be done by those who have an intimate knowledge of the profession.

At this time Massachusetts Police Officers are among the most trained Police Officers in the country. There have been no acts toward the public by any law enforcement officials that warrant such sweeping legislation. I urge you to reconsider the parameters of S2820. Please provide the men and women of Massachusetts law enforcement with the respect they deserve.

Respectfully,

Brendan E. Gahagan
529 Bennington Street
East Boston, MA 02128