



Methuen Police Department

Quinn Public Safety Building

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Neil Perry

Mayor

Joseph E. Solomon

Chief of Police

*“Dear Chair Aaron Michlewitz
Chair Claire Cronin,*

Delivered Via email: Testimony.HWMJudiciary@mahouse.gov

“Dear Chair Aaron Michlewitz and Chair Claire Cronin, please accept the following testimony with regard to SB2820 - 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”.

This proposed legislation appears to have some unintended consequences. Section 10 specifically as written about Qualified Immunity will have a specific negative impact not only to law enforcement but to all municipal employees. This will undoubtedly lead to an increase in law suits and a significant amount of financial responsibility will lie on the shoulders of our communities. There is also the concern that this will reduce the effectiveness of law enforcement as they double or triple question their decision making. This alone can lead to the officer or another individual being injured or worse while the internal deliberation and uncertainty is running its course.

With the significant amount of amendments that were filed with the Senate bill and the expected amendments to the house bill along with the seriousness of this legislation, it is imperative that these efforts reflect strategic approach that is well balanced with the goal of combating crime and prioritizing community safety.

There appears to be a rush to pass legislation that is a response to the country wide protests. Law Enforcement in the Commonwealth is far ahead of the rest of the country. When you look at the 8 can't wait reforms, you will find almost all police departments in the Commonwealth already had these reforms built into their policies. Further, while politically expedient, the rush to pass a bill that is not fully vetted and analyzed will likely have adverse, negative impacts for years to come.

This legislation as written will have a detrimental impact to the moral and effective functioning of our police department. I ask that you forward this bill to public hearings an in-depth study. We have one chance to get this right and those we serve daily deserve the proper forethought and discussion needed to create a comprehensive criminal justice reform

I appreciate the time you have taken to review my concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. E. Solomon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joseph E Solomon
Chief of Police