



City of Everett Massachusetts
Office of the Chief of Police
Everett Police Department

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Via email to: Testimony.HWMJudiciary@mahouse.gov

RE: Concerns to Senate 2820 as Amended

Dear Chairwoman Cronin and Chairman Michlewitz:

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.

I have been a police Officer for 28 years serving the last 17 years as Chief of Police for the City of Everett. A city that has become one of the most diverse in the Commonwealth. I want to start by saying that my family has been policing the streets of Everett, MA since 1926 spanning three generations. In the almost hundred straight years of public service none of us have killed anyone never mind a person of color. I say this because that is the experience of most policing professionals, yet here we are on the verge of radical policing changes in the Commonwealth in a hasty manner without even properly examining the issues of concern. There is no one size fits all solution for policing in America. The history, culture, leadership, norms, laws and more of every city and department are all different.

In my professional opinion what the Senate has proposed in this bill is what would be proposed for the worst of the worst in policing and resembles the type of change that one may propose in a third world country. I am not surprised by the proposals as it is always those that have no answer or solution to societies toughest issues to blame someone - in this case it is the hard working men and women of policing in the Commonwealth. It is shameful and shows a lack of true leadership at our state level.

I will be the first to say that we are by no means perfect but the notion that we seek to go out daily and trample on peoples rights and desire to hurt and harm our citizens of color just because is ridiculous. It would be nice if our elected officials spent a little more time doing their homework and examining their local policing communities they represent before they were to act on such a large piece of legislation.

We are open to change that includes a system of standards that are consistent where all officers have to meet the same criteria. We are open to new training as well that includes topics such as black history, but if I am to line up and take the training because I am part of “the system” so



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should every elected official in the state and every other person working in government. Officers should not fear going to work worrying about if they make an honest mistake that they will be subject to frivolous law suits or be looking over their shoulder due to new boards made of up some people who may have a personal axe to grind. Many of us are already working with clinicians and social workers to co-respond and aid our residents with emotional and mental health problems but I would recommend a more thorough conversation with them before a decision is made to put all the responsibility on them as these encounters can become volatile in short order.

We need a smart measured approach to any changes in how policing is done, not knee jerk reactions based on incidents that are occurring in far away places in the US.

I fully support the amendments made by my friend and colleague Chief Brian Kyes of Chelsea and current representative of our Major City Chiefs Association.

Policing has never been a neat clean business as we are dealing with societies most complex problems. I am extremely proud of the progress we have made over the past few decades and feel we have been on a positive path. Now is not the time to lose some of our best and brightest as well as hamper our efforts to attract the next generation of professional police officers.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important matter. If I can be of assistance feel free to reach out.

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