



July 17, 2020

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
24 Beacon Street
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable Claire Cronin, House Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
24 Beacon Street
State House, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Michlewitz and Cronin,

On behalf of the District Attorneys, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on S.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*. Given that the Senate did not release the printed bill as engrossed until yesterday, we respectfully request that you accept written comments until Monday, July 20th so that we could have a few days to review the extensive bill and provide further, thoughtful feedback.

Despite the time constraints, we have conducted an initial review and are deeply concerned with the authority of The Police Officer Standards and Accreditation Committee, established in section 6, to conduct an independent, and potentially simultaneous, investigation into a police officer's actions that result in serious injury or death. Upon receiving a complaint about a police officer, the Committee would have the power to subpoena documents, materials, and witnesses and hold hearings. General Law chapter 38, section 4 provides the District Attorneys with exclusive jurisdiction to "direct and control" death investigations, which are often technical and complicated. Any concurrent and independent investigation would jeopardize these cases, and potentially interfere with fresh witness accounts, chain of custody of evidence, and the release of information to the public during an active investigation.

We owe the victims of crime, and their families, a thorough, meticulous investigation, without the interference of a simultaneous inquiry by this Committee, regardless of whether or not the incident involves a police officer.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony D. Gulluni".

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MDAA President

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