



THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

July 17, 2020

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

The Honorable Claire D. Cronin, House Chair  
Joint Committee on the Judiciary  
State House, Room 136  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairs Michlewitz and Cronin:

I write today in support of strengthening 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*. Abhorrent recent events around the country have caused a wake-up call to address years of police brutality and racism in our justice systems. I am proud that the Committees are taking swift action on these issues, and am pleased that Speaker DeLeo has elevated reform to one of the top priorities of the House.

We have an opportunity in Massachusetts to rethink how we approach public safety and take steps to reform policing in our state, ensure accountability, and invest in strengthening our communities. S.2820 begins to move Massachusetts in the right direction, strengthening public safety and protecting Black lives.

It is imperative that we listen to communities of color as we focus on addressing police brutality, systemic racism, and the issues that Black and brown people in the Commonwealth face on a daily basis. **I strongly support our colleagues in the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus (MBLLC) and urge the House to pass the policy proposals they have outlined in their plan to address police violence and advance racial justice.**

Specifically, I support the four priority policy proposals of the MBLLC, including creating POST certification, civil service exam reform, creating a commission on structural racism, and adopting clear statutory limits on the use of force including banning tactics such as chokeholds, no-knock

warrants, and use of tear gas. While similar proposals are included in S.2820, including creating a POSAC, which will certify and decertify officers, creating a commission on structural racism, and adopting the use of force standards, civil service reform is not included in the Senate version. I request the committee to include all of the main tenets supported by MBLLC in the bill. I also support including the Senate's reforms to qualified immunity.

In addition, I would like to elevate one of the second-tier priorities of the MBLLC, *An Act Relative to Work and Family Mobility*. As raised in the attached statement from Black immigrant leaders, the link between driving privileges and federal immigration rules is a racial profiling and policing issue. Black immigrant lives are also under attack --included in the top 15 home countries for immigrants in Massachusetts are Brazil, Haiti, Cape Verde, Dominican Republic, and Jamaica. It is also important that key members of the law enforcement community support this bill, including the Massachusetts Major City Police Chiefs Association. **I request that the Committees include language from *An Act Relative to Work and Family Mobility* in the House version of this bill.**

I am grateful that the Committees are taking the steps necessary to consider these complex and critical issues to continue to address racial injustices and police reform. I appreciate all of the work of the Committees to take action on this bill.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,  
Christine

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CPB', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Christine P. Barber  
34th Middlesex District