



# CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

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## Testimony to the Judiciary Committee

March 10, 2010

Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & Chief James Strillacci,  
Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

The Connecticut chiefs oppose **SB #230, AAC Videotaping of Custodial Interrogations**, which would make in-custody interviews in capital, A, and B felonies inadmissible unless videotaped. For a year and a half, the Division of Criminal Justice and selected police departments have been conducting a pilot program to record suspect interviews. Its findings will identify and encourage best practices for interrogation; we expect that police departments will adopt such practices of their own volition once they are shown to be effective.

We support the pilot program, but we cannot support this bill, which adds a new procedural obstacle for the admission of voluntary, truthful, and currently admissible statements.

We oppose **HB #5273, AAC Eyewitness Identification**. Like similar proposals in years past, it ignores the measures already put in place by Connecticut police and prosecutors to remove suggestion from identification procedures. More objectionable, it would mandate sequential line-ups, whose effectiveness has been touted by advocates but remains unproven by real-life research.

The Illinois legislature ordered a field study on sequential double-blind ID; its 2006 report found that "sequential, double-blind procedures resulted in an overall *higher* rate of known false identifications than did simultaneous lineups." (Read it at: <http://www.chicagopolice.org/IL%20Pilot%20on%20Eyewitness%20ID.pdf> .) Though this study has its critics, scientists remain divided on witness identification methods.

The National Institute of Justice Journal No. 258 (October 2007) "Police Lineups: Making Eyewitness Identification More Reliable," noted that "At the present time, [when comparing simultaneous and sequential lineup presentations,] there is no definitive sense that one form of lineup presentation is superior to the other," and warned that, "There are ... people who would like to legislate it [sequential lineup] down people's throats." (Read it at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/journals/258/police-lineups.html> .)

Let's not get ahead of science. Let's be sure what works before we mandate it by law.

We oppose **HB #5445, AAC the Death Penalty**. Whatever our opinions about the penalty, we must object because this bill incorporates provisions mandating videotaped confessions and sequential identification.