

Members of the committee,

My name is David Samuels. I'm the founder of the Community Party in Hartford. I'm speaking in support of S.B. 1230 An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information.

My comments are directed toward the citizens in Connecticut who truly support racial justice. Alvin W. Penn was a state senator who was racially profiled and pushed back by creating legislation to address this type of police abuse. Unfortunately he passed away during the process and his brainchild was named in his honor.

I submit that Alvin Penn must be spinning in his grave as he sees what has become of the state racial profiling law. Backroom political shenanigans have rendered the law impotent and those same shenanigans appear to be happening now to the Community Party's proposed Penn Act amendment. The language in the bill has been watered down and our group was provided with less than three days notice of today's hearing.

A Department of Justice report finds that Blacks and Latinos are more likely to be searched, arrested and subjected to the use of force during traffic stops than whites. The DOJ is currently investigating racial profiling claims against the East Haven police.

I'm asking the good residents of this state to stand with us and contact your legislator today and tell them that you support the Community Party's original version of the Penn Act amendment, which calls for an entity independent of law enforcement to investigate racial profiling complaints and that an oversight committee including at least two community stakeholders be established, in addition to the implementation of a traffic stop receipt which will provide a record of all traffic stops and provide citizens who believe that they have been profiled with a form of recourse.

Our position is that past state reports on racial profiling in this state cannot be trusted because the police control all of the data input. You can follow the Community Party's work on this issue by joining our Facebook page. Let's fight back against politics as usual - the people of Egypt have given us the blueprint.