State of Connecticut

DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES

OFFICE OF CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER
30 TRINITY STREET - 4th Floor
DEFENDER
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

DEBORAH DEL PRETE SULLIVAN
LEGAL COUNSEL/EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT PUBLIC

(860) 509-6405 Telephone
(860) 509-6495 Fax
deborah.d.sullivan@jud.ct.gov

Testimony of
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel
Office of Chief Public Defender

Raised Bill No. 364
An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
March 12, 2012

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports ***Raised Bill 364, An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information,*** which would enhance the Alvin Penn Act and amend C.G.S. §54-1m. The proposed bill makes important changes to the data collection process used to capture information related to traffic stops conducted by municipal and state police departments. The bill requires the use of standardized forms to record and report traffic stop data and requires that a copy of the form be provided to the operator of the motor vehicle. The data collected will ensure that the state will have the information necessary to identify whether racial profiling is being conducted by law enforcement. In addition, standardized forms would be used to record complaints by persons who believe were stopped because of their race, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation.

Racial profiling is an illegal and discriminatory practice that impacts upon the rights of everyone to be treated fairly. Profiling also has significant implications regarding racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionate contact of minorities within the criminal justice system. Justice cannot be meted out in a manner that targets one race or religion, as the result is that everyone in society will be harmed. Discrimination based upon one's religion, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation enforces the negative stereo types that certain people are more predisposed to commit crimes

than others. In addition, such illegal practices perpetuate greater distrust of law enforcement and our government in general.

The bill also shifts the responsibility for oversight and data analysis to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). This Office supports this aspect of the bill and believes that OPM has the ability to use the appropriate resources to review the collected data and make informed recommendations.

We as a society celebrate the diverse cultures that exist. Illegal discriminatory conduct by some should not and cannot be tolerated. This proposed legislation is a good step forward to creating consistency in this state and hopefully a venue for persons who have been subjected to this illegal treatment to have their voices heard and for the discriminatory practices to end. For these reasons, this Office urges support of this bill.