

**Raised S.B. No. 364: AN ACT CONCERNING TRAFFIC STOP INFORMATION**

To enhance compliance with data collection and reporting required under the Alvin W. Penn Racial Profiling Prohibition Act.

Testimony for Public Hearing 03/12/2012.

Sen. Coleman, Rep. Fox, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am here today, not because I have personally been the victim of racial profiling, but because (1) I have friends who have been profiled, and (2) I believe that we - as a society - cannot expect respect for the law unless we can make sure that the law is, without fail, fairly and equitably enforced. The Alvin Penn Act provided a first step in acknowledging and providing some safeguards against racial profiling, but, over the past decade, we have also learned about its limitations, so I am happy to see that changes are being considered that will strengthen it.

To create the desired effect, I hope that you will incorporate the Community Party's provisions into your bill. Specifically, two issues are especially important to me:

(1) Providing motorists with a copy of the Traffic Stop Report will ensure that the forms are being filled out accurately, which is absolutely essential to meaningful data collection.

(2) Creating an independent Oversight Committee to address motorists' complaints in a confidential manner will inspire confidence in the fairness of the process and prevent the possibility of retaliation and/or cover-ups.

Additionally, I believe it is important to add religion and sexual orientation as protected classes, and to direct officers not to inquire about the immigration status of motorists or passengers unless they are being arrested for criminal activity.

I suspect you will hear many first-hand accounts today by victims of racial profiling who are coming forward to tell their stories. But I hope that you will also hear from people like myself, who have not been victims, but who believe wholeheartedly in equal protection under the law for all, and wish to see steps taken that will, someday, make that a reality in Connecticut, and in our country.

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