

# CCM 2012 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-6314

## *JUDICIARY COMMITTEE*

March 12, 2012

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 90% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

### **SB 364, "An Act Concerning Traffic Stop Information"**

SB 364 would, among other things, require the Office of Policy and Management and the Criminal Justice Information System Governing Board to develop a standardized form, in both printed and electronic forms, to be used by municipal police departments and the State Police to record traffic stop information. The proposed new form would include:

- The date, time, and location of the stop
- The name and badge number of the officer
- The race, color, ethnicity, age, and gender of the operator of the motor vehicle, provided the identification of these characteristics shall be based on the observation of the officer.
- The nature of the alleged violation
- Whether the stop resulted in a warning, citation, or summons being issued, and whether a search was conducted or an arrest was made.

The form will also include a notice that if the person being stopped believes they have been stopped because of their race, color, ethnicity, age, gender, or sexual orientation, they may file a complaint with the police department, and a standardized form shall be provided for them.

SB 364 would change where the municipal police department will send the information. Currently, the information is sent to African American Affairs Commission and the Chief State's Attorney. It would require municipal police departments to send the information to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) and the Criminal Justice Information System Governing Board.

The bill also states that if any officer who in good faith records traffic stop information meeting the requirements of the statute shall not be held civilly liable for the act of recording such information, unless their conduct was unreasonable or reckless. SB 364 would place penalties on municipal departments that do not comply.

SB 364 and the Alvin Penn law are designed to address a very important societal issue: racial profiling. It should be noted that *The Hartford Courant* expose is not the definitive word on how municipalities are implementing the law. At today's hearing, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association will discuss their concerns with the article.

There are many communities, like Coventry, that take the law very seriously, and have devised ways to ensure that the Town stays on top of the law. Enclosed are Coventry's (1) review of agency practices regarding biased-based profiling and (2) traffic stop statistics.

CCM urges the Committee to require OPM to consult with municipal chief elected officers, in addition to the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, prior to developing any uniform form. Municipal CEOs are elected by residents of communities, and have the responsibility to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all residents. They know their communities best.

Thank you.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If you have any questions, please call Ron Thomas at [rthomas@ccm-ct.org](mailto:rthomas@ccm-ct.org) at (203) 498-3000.

Enclosures