



Note
3 bills
EM

CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
1800 Silas Deane Highway-Rear Building, Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06070
(860) 757-3909 Fax: (860) 529-4265
www.cpcanet.org

**Testimony to the Committee on the Judiciary, Monday, April 1, 2013
Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & Matthew Reed, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association**

The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association (CPCA) represents all municipal police departments in Connecticut as well as police departments at private and state universities.

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and distinguished members of the Committee, we submit for your consideration our testimony in regards to three specific bills: Raised Bill **6628** – An Act Concerning the Safe Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Peace Officers; Raised Bill **6663** – An Act Concerning Complaints Alleging Misconduct By Law Enforcement Agency Personnel; and, Raised Bill **6639** – An Act Concerning the Use of An Automated Number Plate Recognition System.

The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association **OPPOSES** Raised Bill **6628 – An Act Concerning the Safe Use of Electronic Defense Weapons by Peace Officers**. The Association recommends that such legislation, if enacted, direct the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC) to establish training requirements for the use of Electronic Defense Weapons for the departments that choose to employ such devices. Such requirements could be incorporated into the mandatory sixty hour triennial recertification process already in place.

There is no statute now, nor has there ever been a statute that governs police training in the use of firearms. Instead such training standards are set and governed by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. This subject matter is best administered through the collaborative resources of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council.

The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association opposes the creation of a specific cause of action for a violation of any policy regarding the use of electronic defense weapons. An aggrieved person has a plethora of options in seeking redress of any grievance regarding actions by the police. The Association feels that the legislature ought not be creating such an invitation to litigate against our municipalities or the State.

The Association **OPPOSES** Raised Bill **6663 – An Act Concerning Complaints Alleging Misconduct By Law Enforcement Agency Personnel**. CPCA understands the need for and has long supported the orderly regulation of police personnel. However, we feel this goal is best accomplished through Connecticut's law enforcement governing body, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (POSTC). The legislature created this body for just this purpose, to regulate the conduct and oversee the training of Connecticut law enforcement. The Association recommends that the legislature direct POSTC to research and create a model policy concerning complaints alleging misconduct by police personnel that law enforcement agencies would



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

1800 Silas Deane Highway-Rear Building, Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06070

(860) 757-3909 Fax: (860) 529-4265

www.cpcanet.org

then be required to adopt. It is also the opinion of CPCA that the tenets of the proposed statute directly conflict with existing language contained within existing bargaining unit agreements.

The Association **OPPOSES** Raised Bill 6639 – **An Act Concerning the Use of An Automated Number Plate Recognition System**. Specifically, we oppose Section 1, paragraph (d). This part of the proposed bill requires the destruction of collected data not later than 14 days after it was collected. Success in the use of automated number plate recognition systems in Connecticut and throughout the country has often occurred months and even years after a particular number plate was recorded in a number plate recognition data base.

We recommend that data collected through the use of such systems be retained for a period not to exceed 60 months and that such data be exempt from disclosure through the State's Freedom of Information Act.

This relatively new tool to American law enforcement is proving to be one of the most beneficial tools in detecting and capturing some of our country's most sought after criminals. Child kidnappers, terrorists, robbers, rapists, burglars and car thieves are the citizens who should oppose the use of this technology and the retention of this data. Law abiding citizens should welcome the advent of this technology and embrace it.

Local success in the use of these systems include the saving of a young man's life after a long distance report that the young man, a local University student, went missing and unaccounted for several days. Family members from Ohio came to CT to report the missing student. A check of the vehicle database showed that the student's vehicle had frequented a local mall in the Manchester area on numerous occasions over the previous 2 years. This information allowed police to begin a systematic check of all hotels in that area. The young man was found in a local motel suffering from an overdose and near death. The man was taken to the hospital and survived. The number plate recognition system was instrumental in finding the man and saving his life. Had the data been purged after only 14 days, his vehicle information would not have been in the system as none of the recordings of his car were within the 2 weeks prior to him being found.

In Fairfield and Bridgeport the system assisted a rental car company with locating and recovering a stolen van that had been missing for several months. The plate on the van had been recorded shortly after the time the van was stolen. Police checked the area where the van's plate was recorded and located the stolen van. The van was recovered and the thief was arrested.

In Newington an arson suspect was arrested after a review of the number plate recognition system database revealed that the suspect was, in fact, present in the area of



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

1800 Silas Deane Highway-Rear Building, Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06070

(860) 757-3909 Fax: (860) 529-4265

www.cpcanet.org

the damaged home at the time the arson took place. The review of the database occurred more than 14 days after the date of the crime. Again, the number plate recognition system was instrumental in solving this crime and arresting the offender.

Across the nation these systems are assisting law enforcement in fulfilling their mission of public protection and the apprehension of dangerous criminals. Number plate recognition systems assist in homeland security investigations, terrorist activity investigations as well as the investigation of uncounted violent crimes and the tracking and apprehension of fugitives. The key to the system is the long-term access to the data they house. To limit the retention of this data to an arbitrary, short 14-day timeframe is unnecessary and will impede successful law enforcement investigations.

As long as the data is exempt from public disclosure no one is being harmed by its retention.

The Association urges the Committee to take no action on this proposed bill. If you find you must take action allow the retention of data for 60 months and exempt the data from disclosure.

END