



CEO

Commission on Equity and Opportunity

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Labor and Public Employees Committee

21 February 2017

Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 6663: An Act Concerning Police Misconduct

Dear Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, Representative Porter, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly,

My name is Alok Bhatt. I serve as Policy Analyst for the Commission on Equity and Opportunity (CEO); a nonpartisan legislative group charged with informing policymakers on issues of civil rights, economic stability, education, employment, health, and housing as they impact people of color in the State of Connecticut.

In fulfilling our duty to the Connecticut General Assembly, the CEO writes in strong support of House Bill 6663: An Act Concerning Police Misconduct.

Highly publicized accounts of police violence against black and brown communities in recent years have exacerbated tensions between law enforcement agencies and people of color. Although Connecticut, at least in recent years, has not faced an incident as horrifying as those in Ferguson, New York City, Baltimore, and other cities across the nation, unjust police violence does not elude us. A recent Hartford case, where dashcam footage shows Hartford police officers kicking a man while he lies, handcuffed and subdued, on the ground, demonstrates that we must follow through on accountability with action¹.

The primary culprit in this use of excessive force retired before the completion of a state police investigation against him. Furthermore, the City of Hartford dropped most members of Civilian Review Board after the board voted unanimously to investigate other officers involved in this incident. The State of Connecticut and its residents cannot accept such a

¹ <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/good-cop-great-cop-sketch-comedy-7pm-show-tickets-27627231794>

direct affront to the administration of justice. Inaction on this matter represents complicity, as well as quiet approval.

All law enforcement officers accepted a command to preserve peace and public safety for all Connecticut residents. Police officers who deviate from this duty, and active undermine it, do not deserve to remain on the force.

We appreciate your consideration of this most urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Alok Bhatt
Policy Analyst, Commission on Equity and Opportunity