

Dear Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Michael Clausen and I am a resident of Coventry, CT. I'm writing to support HB 6663: AN ACT CONCERNING POLICE MISCONDUCT.

For decades, police have been granted extreme leniency for using excessive force, particularly in cases where police target black, indigenous, trans, queer, and other marginalized populations.

Police brutality is all too real for these populations in Connecticut. One of the most public cases of excessive police force occurred last June when Hartford police sergeant Sean Spell violently stomped on Emilio Diaz' head after Diaz had already been on the ground.^[1] Another recent case involved Danbury officer David Williams, who was arrested only three weeks ago for kicking a suspect last July.^[2]

These cases are not isolated incidents. They represent a persistent pattern of violence perpetrated by police across the United States. Over 1,000 people were killed by police last year, a number which is practically unrivaled in the rest of the world.^[3] Many many more are abused, terrorized, and assaulted by police on a regular basis.

In too many cases, if action is taken against officers who use excessive force, it is both slow and lenient. Officers are given the benefit of the doubt for extreme violence. Sometimes, action is only taken when news or videos of police brutality are reported to the public.

This bill is a necessary step in bringing justice to cases of extreme force. When voting on this bill, I hope that committee members consider the unavoidable pattern of violence which is only hinted at here, and that members support the passage of this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Clausen

1. <http://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/Retired-Hartford-Officer-Said-He-Kicked-Suspect-in-Excessive-Force-Case-for-Continuing-to-Suit-Blood-Report-208422071.html>

Case-101-Containing-to-Spin-Blind-Report-396452711.html

2. <http://www.courant.com/breaking-news/hc-danbury-officer-arrest-0201-20170131-story.html>

3. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/the-counted-police-killings-us-database>