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Representative Aaron Michlewitz
Chair, House and Committee on Ways and Means
Representative Claire D. Cronin
Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representatives Michlewitz and Cronin,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Senate Bill 2820.

The murder of George Floyd left me disturbed and disgusted that this occurred at the hands of law enforcement officer. This was clearly preventable and unnecessary. His murder, however, is not characteristic of the job officer's do day in and day out, in particular in Massachusetts. As a profession we are constantly changing and striving to be better. Massachusetts police agencies have been progressive to adapting quickly to needed change that occurs in the police profession.

In 2014, President Obama established the 21st Century Policing task force which released its report in 2015. The report highlighted six pillars.

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy
2. Policy and Oversight
3. Technology and Social Media
4. Community Policing and Crime Reduction
5. Training and Education
6. Officer Safety and Wellness

I conducted a review of this report and found that Norton meets and exceeds every pillar. In Norton, the police department started the **Norton Opioid Prevention and Education (NOPE)** collaborative to provide necessary help and resources to victims of the opioid crisis while diverting victims from the criminal justice system. We also have a Problem Oriented Policing Unit (POP) to assist

Our department was awarded the IACP One Mind Campaign certification for our officers being trained in mental health first aid, having a model policy and working with our area crisis team.

Officers have and continue to receive training in topics such as Procedural Justice, Implicate Bias, Mental Health First Aid, and De-Escalation.

We also participate in the FBI national use of force data collection registry.

The Norton Police Department has received Accreditation certification by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation maintaining the best standards, policies and operations of the police profession.

I have very serious concerns about the language in the bill.

In particular the change is the bill made to **qualified immunity** for police officers is far reaching and will have serious implications for this profession as well the public safety of our citizens. Qualified Immunity does not protect officers from illegal and wrongful conduct and this is not absolute immunity which it, seems to be confused with. If changed this will have detrimental effects on proactive public safety and certainly recruitment and retention.


We work collaboratively with the schools, assigning **School Resource Officers** to provide valuable safety information as well as diverting students from the criminal justice system. We have received great feedback from students, faculty, staff and residents for the work we do in the schools. We have open lines of communications all to provide the best service for the community.

Lastly, there is a section regarding racial and other profiling. This in term is **Data collection**. This will become extremely burdensome and be a tremendous amount of work that will require additional support or assistance to do for a department our size.

Education is very important to police officers. The majority of our officers have college and advanced degree. Officers are committed to the communities they work and serve. Many officers are coaches, troop leaders and assist with regular community events.

I look for to working with you, my own legislators, police and community leaders to make positive reforms for the profession in a well thought out open manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian M. Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being the most prominent.

Brian M. Clark
Chief of Police