



Southbridge
Police
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July 17, 2020

TO: Chair Aaron Michlewitz & Chair Claire Cronin

FROM: Chief Shane D. Woodson

SUBJECT: SB2820

Dear Chair Aaron Michlewitz and Chair Claire Cronin:

Please accept the following testimony with regard to SB2820 - An Act to reform police standards and shift resources to build a more equitable, fair and just commonwealth that values Black lives and communities of color.

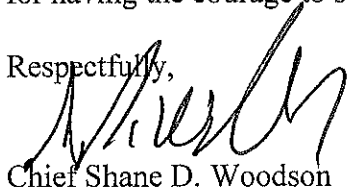
As the Chief of Police in my community, I support any legislative process that works towards attaining a final comprehensive bill that will enhance the delivery of professional policing services in our profession. Unfortunately, I was not provided with the opportunity to work with you and provide input to help us achieve this goal. All I have ever asked for is a "seat at the table" and I'm eager to participate in any subsequent public hearing(s) as it pertains to the Governor's Bill, *An Act to Improve Police Officer Standards and Accountability and to Improve Training*, and/or to Senate Bill 2800 as amended, as the House of Representatives contemplates the potential drafting and releasing of their own legislation specific to police reform in our state.

I will always advocate for additional training, equipment and resources and agree with language in any bill that will further the level of accountability for my officers. Since I have been Chief, I have worked in my community at being transparent with the people we serve. As a result, we have been able to establish many positive relationships with the residents of my community based on a mutual trust. Our residents rely on us to be professional and we treat everyone with compassion and respect. Overall, I challenge anyone to question the brand of policing that my officers provide in our community every single day.

I call your attention to some of the extremely disappointing and disparaging remarks that were made on the floor of the Senate this week by some (not all) Senators. In my opinion, it is an embarrassment to witness my elected officials use an incident that occurred more than 1,000 miles away as leverage to only further their specific political agenda. This is irresponsible and insulting to my officers and is unacceptable to all law enforcement professionals. We give our all, each and every day and never ask for anything in return other than to be treated with fairness and respect.

Thankfully, there were many members of the Senate who have emerged as true leaders. I look forward to working with them in the future and sharing my input at reaching inclusiveness and I commend each of them for having the courage to support our true heroes.

Respectfully,



Chief Shane D. Woodson