

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Judiciary Committee Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Ranking Members

**FROM:** Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence & Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**DATE:** July 17, 2020

**RE:** AAC Police Accountability

The Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) and the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) speak together in support of the working draft of the police accountability legislation, LCO 3471, and are appreciative of the Judiciary Committee's examination and long overdue response to inequality with law enforcement in our state. Many of our members rely on their local law enforcement agencies and the state police to work with them on sexual and domestic violence; however, there are those who are fearful to report their assaults because of perceived racial and gender bias present in law enforcement.

Nationally, forty-percent (40%) of rapes and sexual assaults were reported to police in 2017, but only about 25% were reported to police in 2018, while the rate of sexual assaults for those 12 and older increased. Meanwhile less than fifty-percent (- 50%) of intimate partner violence is reported to the police.<sup>1</sup>

Together we would like to suggest two specific changes to **Sec. 12** concerning the task force to study police transparency and accountability and **Sec. 13** the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. **We propose that the membership of both the task force and the POST Council include two representatives of victim's rights groups.** These representatives will bring their perspective to this body, and will help with the task force and the Council's deeper understanding of the victim's point of view for police accountability, needs for specific training, and a role in decertification.

The effects of policing has significant impact on women of color, especially Black women, and this bill can give some relief to them. One in three women are victims of intimate partner violence and one in five women are victims of sexual assault. Mass incarceration, police brutality, unfair drug policies, and the over-policing of minority neighborhoods affect them in the same way they affect men of color. For victims of domestic and sexual violence law enforcement and the legal system may not viable avenues of recourse, as these systems continue to oppress and discriminate against people of color.<sup>2</sup>

Both The Alliance and CCADV are submitting separate organizational testimony to address other portions of the legislation and we are joining here to highlight the importance to our organizations that victims have a voice in these proceedings and development of police accountability and oversight policies. Victims of domestic violence and sexual violence have specific and often different traumas, often centered on a lack of power and control, and their experiences will offer an often-unheard point of view regarding interactions with law enforcement.

We thank you for your consideration and the work you have done with this bill. We urge you to add two members of a victim rights organization to both the task force to study police transparency and accountability (Sec. 12) and to the Police Officer Standards and Training Council (Sec 13).

Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions:

Lucy Nolan, The Alliance  
[lucy@endsexualviolencect.org](mailto:lucy@endsexualviolencect.org) or 860.966.2816

Liza Andrews, CCADV  
[landrews@ctcadv.org](mailto:landrews@ctcadv.org) or 860.919.9707

<sup>1</sup> US Bureau of Justice Criminal Victimization, 2018, Rachel E. Morgan, Ph.D., and Barbara A. Oudekerk, Ph.D., September 2018.  
<https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv18.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Black Women and Sexual Violence, <https://now.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Black-Women-and-Sexual-Violence-6.pdf>