



June 10th, 2020

Please Support SB20-217 “Enhance Police Integrity Act”

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

As a coalition of [16 affordable housing developers and service providers](#) serving low-income and minority populations across the state, NDC and its non-profit allies are keenly aware that the forces of institutional racism that through the legacy of redlining and predatory lending exclude people of color from safe, secure, and affordable housing, are the same ones that on the other hand engulf that population in a bloated, unjust, and excessively violent justice system. The fact that the Black and Brown households in this State that have the most housing insecurity are also the ones that face the most police violence is unacceptable.

NDC’s members work closely with those they house everyday to help them attain the best possible outcomes and greatest possible access to opportunity for themselves and their families. We envision a future where vulnerable families can expect as a matter of legal and cultural course to also be met halfway by public servants who are legally incentivized to always offer a helping hand instead of pointing a loaded gun.

As this bill outlines a series of actions that will make it significantly more difficult for police officers to default to violence, significantly more likely to hold each other accountable when one of them acts inappropriately, and whose actions and patterns of actions can be observed in a transparent way, we strongly support SB20-217 as a common sense first step towards reforming the relationship between Colorado’s police officers and those they are tasked to serve.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Cappelli
Executive Director, Neighborhood Development Collaborative



NDC Members

Denver Housing Authority

Ismael Guerrero, Executive Director

Archway Housing & Services, Inc.

Sebastian Corradino, Executive Director

Colorado Coalition for the Homeless

Bill Windsor, Vice President of Housing Development

Colorado Housing Assistance Corp.

Michelle Mitchell, President

Community Resources & Housing Development Corp.

Arturo Alvarado, Executive Director

Del Norte Neighborhood Development Corp.

Marvin Kelly, Executive Director

Denver Urban Renewal Authority

Robin Hickey, Housing Manager

Elevation Community Land Trust

Stefka Fanchi, Executive Director

Colorado Community Land Trust

Jane Harrington, Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver

Heather Lafferty, Executive Director

Mental Health Center of Denver

Michael Niyompong, VP of Strategic Partnerships

NEWSED Community Development Corp.

Andrea Barela, Executive Director

Northeast Denver Housing Center

Gete Mekonnen, Executive Director

Rocky Mountain Communities

Dontae Latson, President and CEO

Urban Land Conservancy

Aaron Miripol, President and CEO

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June 10, 2020

To Members of House Finance Committee:

I am writing to you about SB 217 to explain the support of the [Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition](#). We know the focus of SB 217 has been a response to the important issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement and we do not want to detract from this in any way. There is a significant disability component when it comes to policing and sadly to police brutality of SOME and definitely not all law enforcement personnel. As you may know, more than 50% of the high profile killings of black people in the past decade have been people with disabilities. As you also know, because of our failures providing mental health services many families caring for people with severe behavioral health issues have to rely on the police to address these issues when they go beyond what families can manage. We have both good and bad stories (most but not all of the good stories are from white people) so our support of this bill is not an indictment of all police. I want to speak to two specific parts of the bill.

1) Body cameras: This is protection for everyone involved. It can be used to improve training to avoid tragedies. If someone is truly threatening it will protect the officer if force is inevitable. Body cameras will demonstrate why the use of force is justified when justified and can hold people accountable when it is not justified. People that use police often have been made to be afraid that their personal family tragedies such as suicide attempts will be posted on Facebook or otherwise made public if this bill passes. I do not believe this is accurate. I know as someone that uses CORA for advocacy purposes that any request for records in any government agency is ALWAYS reviewed and certain information including identifying medical information is never given the public. We appreciate amendments to address privacy issues and hope that as leaders you can help me reassure people that these private matters will not be made public if the families do not want that. Sadly, we have also had members who have reported first responder misconduct when dealing with suicidal people. Anytime when the complainant has a mental health issue (whether real or perceived) no complaint is taken seriously unless there is clear evidence. The situations we deal with are complex and there is no one thing everyone will want. Our position is that we can have accountability AND protect the privacy of people who are dealing with private grief or medical issues.

NOTHING ABOUT us, WITHOUT us...EVER!

2) Not allowing officers that have a history to work elsewhere. This is consistent with all other state policies including bills passed every year in the past 4 years with regard to people that have contact with vulnerable populations. We bar people from much less powerful positions for much lesser offenses. We have a member who worked in the I/DD system and was a beloved provider. She was late in getting someone home due to a traffic situation and as a result, one client was late getting a medication with no harm to the client. This person was reported to adult protection and just because of that is now not allowed to work ANYWHERE in the I/DD system. Someone cannot be a homemaker provider if they have any arrest record without a lot of bureaucracy and some crimes prohibit any employment. These employees do not carry a gun and do not make life and death decisions and are not expected to address serious behavioral issues alone. If we stop people from working in a field over these issues, why would we not do as much, if not more, for professionals that have the ability to make life and death decisions?

There are other important parts of the bill but I wanted to speak to these specific aspects and alert you to the strong disability connection on this bill.

If you want to discuss this please let me know. Thank you for your support of this bill that will help MANY Coloradoans.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julie Reiskin', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Julie Reiskin, Executive Director



June 10, 2020

Re: Written Testimony in Support of SB20-217

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee:

I am the director of policy and civil rights litigation at the Meyer Law Office, an immigration, civil rights, and criminal defense firm in Denver. I applaud the moral courage of the Colorado General Assembly in responding to this pivotal moment in our state's, and nation's, history. Senate Bill 217 is crucial for accountability and for the vindication of the rights of many underrepresented and marginalized communities in Colorado. It will make our society safer and more just.

SB 217 creates many important provisions to increase police accountability, including mandatory body camera usage and essential reporting measures. Perhaps its broadest-reaching measure with the more consequential effect is the creation of a private right of action for violations of the Colorado Bill of Rights, without the ability of government officials to hide behind immunities and defenses where they should be liable. Coloradans will be able to seek vindication for violations of their civil rights in state courts, through state judges and juries.

Currently the ability to seek any kind of vindication of those rights is limited to prospective relief, which is like catching lightning in a bottle and involves resources that many underprivileged communities, and the lawyers who would help them, do not have. For example, in my prior role as a staff attorney at the ACLU of Colorado, I helped stop the El Paso County Sheriff from holding people in his jail at the request of ICE.

Once we learned of the practice, I made several trips from Denver to the jail in Colorado Springs over the course of a few weeks to interview people who were held for ICE, and were not about to be released. Indeed, there were many people who were released to ICE custody for whom we could no longer do anything. We found two plaintiffs to file a class action, and we eventually obtained a ruling that the Sheriff was violating the Colorado Constitution's prohibitions on unreasonable seizures, as well as the right to bail. The court ordered the practice to stop. There were no fees for the ACLU, and no money for our clients.

The Colorado affiliate of the preeminent civil rights organization in the nation can bring such a case, but there are many civil rights lawyers in Colorado who cannot. Most potential clients come to us after the damage has been done, and without a damages case there is nothing we can do for them. It is all-too frequent that we learn of local law enforcement who deprive people of their liberty by trying to enforce federal immigration law, and there's nothing we can do about it after the fact.

Even if there was, private attorneys who represent the little guy who has suffered violation of their rights cannot maintain a surviving practice without attorneys' fees and damages cases, as their clients cannot afford to make payments on hourly or flat-fee arrangements.

The Colorado Constitution purports to protect everyone in the state. But without a real, meaningful way to enforce those enumerated rights, marginalized groups are often left powerless to seek justice following abuses they have suffered. We need SB 217 to give people real meaning to the Colorado Bill of Rights as a document that protects all Coloradans. I urge you to vote in support of Senate Bill 217. Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Arash Jahanian', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Arash Jahanian

Dear Colorado Legislators,

I would like to start by expressing sincere gratitude for the amount of time and effort it took to consider each of the amendments that passed in the senate for Senate Bill 20-217. For a law enforcement family, the original bill was terrifying and left us feeling discriminated against based on profession. It was a major relief to see an officer's potential liability be reduced from \$100,000 to \$25,000 while being given the option to obtain insurance. I pray this amendment will be left in tact upon final reading in the House. Without the amendment, the good men and women who serve their communities will have a hard time continuing to give their best to this already physically and emotionally demanding job.

We are thankful both parties came together to work towards a goal that will satisfy the greater public while still allowing a peace officer to continue to do the job they were called to do. However, we know senate bill 20-217 still needs some work to revise some of the language used in the bill. The biggest change we would still like to see is the presumption of misconduct if an officer's body camera is not on during an interaction. In a country where burden of proof falls on the shoulders of the accuser rather than the accused, I would hope you would be willing to consider the same sentiment for our law enforcement officers in regards to missing body camera footage. The better majority of these men and women serve honorably! I think it is especially important for all of you, as well as the greater community, to understand and believe that GOOD law enforcement officers do not want to be discredited because of the few who chose to act egregiously..... And the GOOD far outweighs the bad.

Above, I mentioned "calling." Yes- these men and women feel law enforcement is their calling. They gladly go to work each day not knowing if they will come home to their families. They proudly do this because they took an oath to PROTECT and serve their communities. It is not an oath they have taken lightly! I do not think the amount of physical and emotional abuse law enforcement officers endure during their careers should be forgotten or ignored, yet they still continue to put on their uniform because they know their communities still need them.

My husband is lucky to serve a community that is Pro-law enforcement, however it is not lost on me that most of the other officers around the state are not as lucky. I hope you all feel the tremendous weight you carry right now. Without your support, the lack of support from communities across the state will continue to decrease. Without your support, it will become more difficult for our GOOD peace officers to continue to want to do their jobs. Please do not discredit how important GOOD peace officers are to our society.

And finally, please remember the families of these men and women. Many of them are married, have children, and own homes. As a police wife with four children, my family makes sacrifices on a daily basis so our husband and father, who is viewed as a HERO, can continue to protect and serve our community.

Respectfully,

Lindsay Rashid

Dear All Colorado State Legislators regarding Bill 217,

I am a Law Enforcement Spouse. My husband along with thousands of his fellow law enforcement brothers and sisters make up the 99.999% of GREAT officers who serve and protect our great nation honorably day in and day out. These men and women have committed to wear this badge with dignity and grace and NO one is more outraged at the actions of the FEW bad cops more than the good cops and their families!

This bill created so much fear and stress in our lives, what if my husband makes an honest mistake at work? What will the ramifications be? How will it affect our lively hood? Our kids already wonder if they will see daddy after each shift, but now we must wonder if we will have a home to come home to if a mistake is made. The amendments made earlier this week made us feel much more at ease and for that we are grateful! I am supportive of the amendments that continue to protect the privacy of those that would be filmed on a body worn camera and would like to see the language that implies or gives presumption that there is a nefarious activity by the officer if the camera was not on, removed from this bill.

The media, leaders and legislators have demonized law enforcement so much across this country. My husband served in the Army for 15 years prior to his career in law enforcement. He dreamed of being a police officer as a little boy. He signed a dotted line willing to lay down his life for any citizen in this country. Yes, even you ladies and gentlemen even though your support has not been felt, he would show up, he would stand guard and protect you from any harm with out question. My son has been receiving threats from class mates because his dad is cop, we had to take our thin blue line stickers off of our cars so we are not run off the road, we should not be afraid to be proud of my husbands career. We have had to un-list our phone numbers, our address and even remove our last name from social media to protect ourselves. My children are so proud to have a dad that serves and protects, and we are having to ask them to not talk about it. This is no way to live, we can find balance. We can protect the rights of all citizens without demonizing one or the other. See equal rights for one group does not mean you take them away form the other, its not a pie.

Please consider taking the emotional reaction to the horrible acts of the Minneapolis police officers out of this bill and making rational decisions that serve all citizens.

Sincerely,

Maren Mima

In regards to proposed Bill SB20-217 I have some recommendations for amendments.

In regards to Use of Force and authorized deadly force encounters the bill proposes the following. "The bill creates a new use of force standard by limiting the use of physical force and limiting the use of deadly force when force is authorized. The bill prohibits a peace officer from using a chokehold."

I have worked as a Colorado Peace Officer for a little over two years. During which time I have been in multiple situations that required the use of force. All of which were dynamic, changing and each very different. Currently the governing sanction for using force is the US Case Law Graham V. Connor. This states using objective reasonableness in the level and amount of force used by an officer. This in more broader terms is using the minimum amount of force necessary to stop the threat or take the suspect into police custody. Furthermore it lays a framework into taking into account an appropriate level of force based on multiple factors to include. The severity of the crime, Whether the subject possesses an immediate threat to the safety of the officer(s) or others, Whether the subject is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight, The availability of officers/ resources to de-escalate the situation and the size of the individual.

Attempting to limit the use of deadly force in a justified encounter is very worrisome to me. When deadly force is authorized, all force constituting deadly force should be authorized. Still adhering to Graham V. Connor and using objective reasonableness to stop the threat. However, attempting to limit the use of deadly force by an officer is a critical safety risk to the officer and the general public. An officer may feel fearful or hesitant to use an authorized level of deadly force due to fear of violating this proposed policy. This may cost them their life and the lives of others should the suspect remain at large. When using deadly force it is all or none. There is no varying threshold for using a level of force that can kill an individual when justified. This also includes the use of a chokehold. A chokehold by my department's policy is considered an authorized use of deadly force. Deadly force incidents are considered critical incidents and an investigation and an internal affair will always ensue.

In another section of the proposed bill the following is stated. "The bill requires a peace officer to have ~~an objective justification~~ *a legal basis* for making a ~~stop contact~~ . After making a ~~stop contact~~ , a peace officer shall report to the peace officer's employing agency that information that the agency is required to report to the ~~attorney general's office~~ *division of criminal justice.*"

In regard to a "legal basis" I would like the bill to give greater clarification on the definition of a legal basis. Is this meaning an officer must have probable cause to make a contact. Currently contacts based solely off of consent is on a legal basis.

Lastly in the proposed bill the following is stated

“beginning July 1, 2023, the bill requires the division of criminal justice in the department of public safety to create an annual report of the information that is reported to the ~~attorney general~~ *division*, aggregated and broken down by state or local agency that employs peace officers, along with the underlying data. Each ~~state and~~ local agency *and the Colorado state patrol* that employs peace officers shall report to the ~~attorney general~~ *division* :

- All use of force by its *peace* officers that results in death or serious bodily injury;
- All instances when ~~an~~ a *peace* officer resigned while under investigation for violating department policy;
- All data relating to ~~stops~~ *contacts* conducted by its peace officers; and
- All data related to the use of an unannounced entry by a peace officer.

The division of criminal justice shall maintain a statewide database with data collected in a searchable format and publish the database on its website. Any state and local law enforcement agency that fails to meet its reporting requirements is subject to suspension of its funding by its appropriating authority.”

Having a statewide database of instances of deadly force encounters, all instances when a peace officer resigned while under investigation for violating policy, all data for contacts and unannounced entry by a peace officer is concerning and something I am very cautious about endorsing. Making these stats public could cause further hate toward police and divide.

Unfortunately in law enforcement there are instances where we must go through extremes when all other options have been exhausted. This includes using deadly force, unannounced entries (SWAT team, hostage rescue and no knock warrants.) This is to preserve the safety of the public and of Colorado Peace Officers. I would hope the stats posted and all information made public on the DOJ database would respect the confidentiality of peace officers.

I understand my chosen profession has an inherent amount of risk that I must assume ownership of. I accept this risk due to the noble cause of my profession, preserving the constitution and most importantly preserving human life. This bill has the potential to put me at greater risk.

Anything worth doing, is worth doing right, and there is nothing about this bill that is right.

Criminals don't like cops, they never have. They don't like laws, the laws that YOU created for society to function. You want cops to stop arresting so many people for breaking the law? Get rid of your laws then. Make all drugs legal, make stealing cars legal, make harassment and child abuse legal. Then you won't have to be burdened with seeing the necessary evil that is our officers doing their jobs. We need them to be the tough guys in our society because we can't always do it ourselves.

You don't want police pulling over drunk drivers? I don't either, I want him to come home at night, and not worry that someone in that car is going to shoot him.

You don't want police breaking up DVs? Me neither, I want him to come home at night, and not worry that someone is going to follow him home.

You don't want police going after drug dealers that are selling to kids? Then make it all legal, so I don't have to worry about him getting stabbed or ambushed while he's getting into his car.

There is more good than bad out there, whether you choose to believe it or not. Most of you have no idea what it's like to be a cop, heck neither do I, but I can tell you a little bit about what it's like to live with one.

I've cried every night for the last few weeks, the 1st night was when I watched George Floyd be murdered by that evil excuse for a man, while everyone turned their back on him and let it happen

I'm not one to pick a fight for my own sake, I'm usually "politically quiet," I'm a nurse, and my job and my calling means that I'll take care of you no matter who you are or what you've done. Whether you're a fancy CEO or a drug addict, I'll damn sure fight for you if you can't, fight for those who don't have a voice, especially when everyone turns their back on them

Just like those officers turned their backs on George, America is turning their backs on our police officers, and they don't care how many of the good guys they're going to lose. They're turning their backs on the people they call to help them. They're turning their backs on the ones that come whenever they're called, go to work even when they know they might not come back.

When he went to Iraq, he wasn't sure if he'd come home. When he leaves for a 10-hour shift, it's absolutely heartbreaking that we have to worry about the same things in the country he fought so hard for, I am ashamed of America right now for so many reasons. He now has to carry the weight of every wrongdoing that any cop has ever done. Don't we all just want to be treated and judged for who we are? Not by our skin color or profession?

Criminals will always hate cops, people that have no respect for authority, each other or themselves should not be dictating policy and our representatives should not be making such rash decisions based on an emotional response and the assumed guilt of an entire profession. Their cries have been answered because they're the loudest, but we need to sit back and use some common sense before we tie the hands of the people we call on daily to save us.

You say we need more "good cops" and that's exactly what this bill will discourage, who in their right mind would want to put themselves under the microscope of people that have no idea what it's like to be a cop? I know I wouldn't, and I thank God there's people that still do.

Brenden Hoglund

Tue, Jun 9,
9:52 PM (14
hours ago)

I am deeply disturbed at the idea and the spirit behind what this bill appears to represent.

This bill began as a downright attack against law enforcement, not as an establishment, but as individuals. The original writing of this bill included the possibility to sue an individual for an amount (\$100,000) that would force them to most likely sell their homes or make it impossible to support their families. To make it even worse it included specific verbiage that the law enforcement officer could not protect themselves or their families with an insurance policy.

I understand that we have some bad law enforcement officers in this world but this is not the majority. The majority are the people that you are going to call on when you need help the most. They are good, upstanding and well intentioned people who genuinely want to help people and want to improve the communities in which they work. They want to keep you safe as that is their job.

I have had the privilege to work side by side with some of these men and women. I rely on them every time I go to work to help keep me safe while I do my job. I also have law enforcement personal in my family and the amount of anxiety and worry this bill has caused my family is unmeasurable and it makes me sick to my stomach.

While I understand some amendments have been made to the original bill to limit some of the scope, the spirit of this bill still remains, in my eyes, as an unwarranted attack on our law enforcement officers.

I encourage you, as our elected leaders, to support our law enforcement officers in their efforts to keep us safe. Do not spend time working towards legislation that will make them feel like they are being punished for the malicious actions of the few bad law enforcement personnel that are out there.

Sincerely
Brenden Hoglund



Colorado Bar Association

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To: The Honorable Leslie Herod
Chair, Colorado House Committee on Finance

From: CBA Legislative Policy Committee
Staff contact – Andy White, CBA Legislative Director

Date: June 10, 2020

Re: Senate Bill 20-217 CBA Testimony in Support

The Colorado Bar Association (CBA) stands in support of Senate Bill 20-217.

Last week, the CBA publicly expressed its unequivocal solidarity with those who have organized in Colorado, across the nation, and around the world, to peacefully protest the unlawful deaths of Black men and women, which has occurred far too often at the hands of law enforcement officers.

CBA mourns the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Elijah McClain and condemns all tragic acts of racial injustice, intolerance, and hatred. We appreciate that Senate Bill 20-217 is responsive to Coloradans' demands for justice and accountability.

The Colorado Bar Association supports Senate Bill 20-217 and the need for action.

Senate Bill 20-217 takes a critical step in addressing this issue by providing a cause of action for certain violations of the Colorado Constitution. Additionally, this bill enhances the transparency of law enforcement personnel and agencies and ensures they are accountable for their actions. CBA recognizes the inherent difficulties and risks that law enforcement officers face every day in their jobs; certainly, their responsibilities include ensuring the safety and protecting the lives of all people. When officers do not do that, though, Colorado law should hold them accountable.

An important aspect of this bill are newly established reporting requirements for law enforcement agencies to detail specific uses of force and other law enforcement action. The bill also authorizes the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board to take action against law enforcement officers who are found to fail in their duties to protect and serve the public.

These provisions for data reporting and tracking as well as improved accountability are essential to prevent future inappropriate uses of force and, ultimately, unnecessary deaths.

Additionally, Senate Bill 20-217 restrains law enforcement officers' use of deadly physical force to only very narrow circumstances – namely, when (1) all other means of apprehension are impractical under the circumstances, (2) the attempted arrest is for a felony involving the use or threatened use of deadly physical force, (3) there is a substantial risk that the person being arrested will cause death or serious bodily injury if apprehension is delayed, and (4) the force does not create a substantial risk of injury to an innocent person. This provision essentially codifies the holding from *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S. 1, 11 (1985), a U.S. Supreme Court case that states that using deadly force against a fleeing suspect who poses no imminent danger is unconstitutional.

Finally, this bill allows individuals to bring civil lawsuits against officers for inappropriate and unlawful uses of force as well. This bill does not allow for qualified immunity as a defense and provides an avenue to hold officers accountable for unreasonable and unconstitutional actions.

The Colorado Bar Association recommends technical adjustments to Senate Bill 20-217.

While CBA supports Senate Bill 20-217, we recognize that, despite being a profound and significant step, the bill requires additional technical adjustments to prevent difficulties in its administration.

Specifically, CBA recommends the legislature examine and clarify several questions that arise from the bill, including, but not limited to, whether:

- The reference in Senate Bill 20-217 to inapplicable statutory immunities and limitations on liability, damages, and attorney fees should be further defined so as to avoid unintended consequences;
- Senate Bill 20-217 should provide for the survival of the civil action when injury to the party results in death;¹ and
- Privacy of protected health information under state and federal law should be reconciled with requirements under Senate Bill 20-217 for recording and the public release of video footage.

CBA recognizes the tight timeline of the remaining legislative session to address these technical concerns. Regardless of whether the legislature takes action on these matters now or in a future session after enactment, CBA is committed to the continued refinement of SB20-217.

¹ For instance, under federal common law, if injury to the party results in death, damages under a 42 U.S.C. § 1983 action are determined based on survival of action precepts.



June 10, 2020

Chairwoman Herod and Members of the House Finance Committee:

On behalf of Counties & Commissioners Acting Together (CCAT), we urge you to support SB20-217, Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity. The historic and recent police action, particularly with respect to People of Color, warrants policy reform to increase police accountability and transparency are needed. Communities across Colorado are rightfully demanding change.

CCAT member counties want to express our appreciation to Senator Fields and President Garcia for listening to the concerns of law enforcement and local government and working hard to address many stakeholder concerns to ensure the law works as intended.

- CCAT supports the bill as amended by the Senate; the Senate amendments addressed CCAT's most serious concerns with the introduced bill.
- CCAT asks for support of any new amendments to be offered by our coalition partners, such as County Sheriffs of Colorado and the Colorado Municipal League.
 - With the addition of these amendments, CCAT believes that the bill can strike the balance of better governing through policing reform.
 - CCAT also maintains that the guardrails and other changes made by the Senate will help prevent unintended consequences that could be detrimental to the role law enforcement plays in protecting our communities.

We want to convey our greatest thanks to the General Assembly for taking on this difficult issue. Colorado needs to lead the way with effective and smart changes to community safety and policing. Now is the time for those changes, and CCAT county commissioners look forward to collaborating with members of the General Assembly, our county sheriffs, and our communities in implementing SB 217 and moving forward successfully.

Sincerely,

CCAT Co-Chair
Mayor Pro Tem Guyleen Castriotta
City & County of Broomfield

CCAT Co-Chair
John Messner
Gunnison County

CCAT Vice Chair
Commissioner Rich Cimino
Grand County

CCAT Vice Chair
Randy Wheelock
Clear Creek County



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Heidi Henkel, Broomfield
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Sean Wood, Clear Creek
Robin Kneich, Denver*
Kathy Chandler Henry,
Eagle
Matt Scherr, Eagle
Ron Engels, Gilpin
Linda Isenhardt, Gilpin
Gail Watson, Gilpin
Kristen Manguso, Grand
Merrit Linke, Grand
Jonathan Houck, Gunnison
Roland Mason, Gunnison
Casey Tighe, Jefferson*

Leslie Dahlkemper,
Jefferson*
Libby Szabo, Jefferson*
Gwen Lachelt, La Plata
Julie Westendorff, La Plata
Clyde Church, La Plata
Sarah Mudge, Lake*
John Kefalas, Larimer*
Steve Child, Pitkin
Patti Clapper, Pitkin
Kelly Mcnicholas Kury,
Pitkin
George Newman, Pitkin
Greg Poschman, Pitkin
Doug Monger, Routt
Tim Corrigan, Routt
Peter McKay, San Juan*
Hilary Cooper, San Miguel
Lance Waring, San Miguel
Kris Holstrom, San Miguel
Thomas Davison, Summit
Elisabeth Lawrence,
Summit
Karn Stiegelmeier, Summit
** Denotes individual
Commissioner members*



COLORADO JUVENILE DEFENDER CENTER

WE BELIEVE IN YOUTH

There is no excuse. There is no justification. There is no explaining.

The senseless murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery and so many more BIPOC and LGBTQ people at the hands of law enforcement is inexcusable. Yet, we are hearing police officials provide justification for these acts—justifications rooted in laws that allow police to respond violently and in ways that perpetuate a deeply flawed and systemically racist institution. An institution that oppresses our family, our friends, and our neighbors. And time and time again, these institutions offer our communities nothing but empty explanations about why police need the authority for violence and why police need more funding.

At Colorado Juvenile Defender Center (CJDC), our hearts are broken; we stand in solidarity and in defense of those who are most deeply impacted by a systemically racist and irrefutably flawed injustice system that begins with police. We endeavor, as an organization and as members of an organization, to use our funds, our skills, and our training to support and advocate for those who are not only marginalized in our injustice system but also brutalized by it. At the bedrock of CJDC’s work is a sustained commitment to deconstructing racism and racist systems.

CJDC is a legal organization. Being able to practice law is a powerful privilege. We are doing all we can to ask ourselves how we can wield our power and our privilege in this moment in a way that is most meaningful and impactful for those who are most at risk and who are willingly or unwillingly on the front lines in the battle against police violence and systemic racism. To that end, we are taking time to listen to our clients, our community partners, and organizers. When we listen, we hear just how we are needed in this moment—how our privilege can be leveraged to rectify systemic injustices and violence.

As we listen, we hear more and more horrifying stories that are inexcusable, unjustifiable, and inexplicable. And yet, violent policing has been allowed to continue because of how Colorado law is written. Because of a doctrine called “qualified immunity,” it is almost impossible to hold law enforcement accountable for their violent and disproportionate policing practices.

Representative Herod, alongside Representative Gonzales-Gutierrez, is introducing a bill Concerning Measures To Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity which CJDC adamantly supports. We also supported a similar previous bill, the Colorado Rights Act, which died in committee earlier this year. Representative Herod’s bill provides a person who has had a right, privilege, or immunity secured by the Colorado constitution infringed upon, to bring a civil action for the violation. Also, the Attorney General will be able bring an action under the same circumstances. A plaintiff who prevails is entitled to damages and reasonable attorney fees, and a defendant in an individual suit is entitled to reasonable attorney fees for defending frivolous claims.

This bill would end qualified immunity. A defendant's good faith but erroneous belief in the lawfulness of their conduct would not be defenses to a brutality suit. This bill goes further, creating a unit of the Attorney General’s Office to investigate and determine whether to indict police officers who killed or caused serious bodily injury to others; mandatory data collection and reporting on police stops and use of force; increased use of summons instead of custodial arrests; limitations on dynamic (forced) entries into people’s homes and a prohibition on



COLORADO JUVENILE DEFENDER CENTER

WE BELIEVE IN YOUTH

no-knock warrants. This legislation is one necessary step in recognizing the systemic and disproportionate use of force by law enforcement against communities of color.

Many of the lived truths we hear from clients and partners involve the over-policing of students of color, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities. Police are more abundantly present in schools where these students are and police involvement in discipline as well as law enforcement referrals disproportionately happen when incidents at school involve these students. We stand for the value of a safe education for all young people.

We will be clear: **Police are an obstacle to safe education.** Police involvement leads to fear in school hallways, engenders disconnection with educational services as students face overly harsh discipline that could have been handled through restorative justice or educational professionals, and facilitates the school to prison pipeline.

Denver Public Schools Board Director Tay Anderson has proposed a resolution to end DPS funding for law enforcement in schools. This resembles similar efforts in Minneapolis, Chicago, and other school systems. This is a monumental and necessary step to ending the school to prison pipeline. **We support Tay Anderson and Jennifer Bacon's resolution and encourage other school districts to follow DPS's lead.**

Our clients of color, particularly those who are Black and/or LGBT, are disproportionately swept into the school to prison pipeline. They are also disproportionately harmed inside of the criminal system. Our juvenile clients are brutalized, stigmatized, and neglected throughout their experience with the criminal system – especially our Black clients. When we go to expunge and/or deregister our BIPOC and LGBTQ clients, we bear witness to the trauma that the criminal system has inflicted upon them. Some of our clients still have nightmares about their arrest or have panic attacks every time they see a uniformed officer. Some have been physically or sexually assaulted by police. We will be clear: **Police are an obstacle to safe and healthy childhood.**

We unequivocally condemn a systemically racist police force that violently and disproportionately targets BIPOC and LGBTQ people

We stand in support of individuals, organizations, and movements to divest from policing and to stop the school to prison pipeline.

We demand accountability for police violence against our loved ones and neighbors.

We vow to continue doing what we can to work with our clients, our allies in the community, and our partners to end the violence against Black and LGBTQ lives at the hands of those who supposedly swore to protect us.

With love, condolences, and wholehearted support to the surviving families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more,

The Colorado Juvenile Defender Center

Written Testimony from the Colorado Municipal League- Please adopt compromise amendments on SB 20-217

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today. First, CML would like to add that we understand the need for change in this arena. CML voiced concerns over the financial implications of Section 2 in SB 20-217 to municipalities in the Senate and those concerns remain, but that does not mean we do not believe reform is necessary.

That is why CML and our partners have worked in good faith to find solutions in SB 20-217. CML would like to recognize the significant work that has been done in the Senate. Though significant improvements were made in the Senate Chamber, CML respectfully requests additional amendments be added in the House Finance Committee. We believe these have been drafted with the support of the bill sponsors and proponents.

- In Section 1, we ask to clarify body cam requirements are for peace officers. As written the requirement could apply to victim advocates or administrative personnel.
- For Section 3, use of force, we ask to change implementation date to September 1, 2020 and require all peace officers to be trained in new standard before that date.

We also understand that there are also other amendments that will be proposed for Section 1 that will allow for more privacy protections for witness and victims. We are also supportive of those amendments.

This bill is a massive change in policy, and we appreciate the willingness of the bill sponsors Representative Leslie Herod and Representative Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez to further improve SB 20-217.

Thank you for your time.

Meghan Dollar, legislative advocacy manager
Colorado Municipal League

Written Testimony from the Colorado Municipal League- Please adopt compromise amendments on SB 20-217

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Thank you for your time.

Meghan Dollar, legislative advocacy manager
Colorado Municipal League



Testimony in Strong Support of SB 217: Accountability is a Critical First Step towards Police Reform and Racial Justice

My name is Karla Gonzales Garcia. I am the Policy Director for the Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR). COLOR works to engage and empower the Latino community to speak out about the policies that impacts our community. We are committed to ensuring that Latinas and our families are able to make personal decisions about health, have access to affordable health services and that we are each able to live our lives with dignity.

COLOR strongly and passionately supports Senate Bill 217, which provides measures to enhance law enforcement integrity and push for accountability within this system to try to address the rampant racism and violence that we have seen far too often.

Let us be clear that the roots of our current criminal justice system are built from the days of slavery and the control of Indigenous people. We have to start there to understand that there is a lot of work to do for justice to exist in this system for Black people and other people of color.

In the wake of a global uprising in response to the killing of George Floyd by police and the national push for action with the deaths of Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Nina Pop, and so many others there is a renewed push for real and substantive action to address police brutality and find concrete actions that can be taken now as we reckon with the larger and more long-term culture change.

We are grateful to the lawmakers who have brought this measure forward. It contains a robust list of important steps. We are excited to see this important progress. While many mourn for the lost lives, words simply not enough. We need actions. We urge your swift passage of this legislation and a commitment to continue policy measures to address the widespread systemic issues that have contributed to this harrowing issue. We look forward to continuing to work with you to make the many necessary changes at every level and in every sector to ensure not only that Black lives matter in our state, but also that Black people and other people of color can live free from fear with health, safety and dignity. Thank you.

Submitted by: Karla Gonzales Garcia, Policy Director, Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR), 303-393-0382

Dear Colorado,

I am a Law Enforcement Officer. I am not usually one to brag about myself but, for the purpose of this letter, it is important that you know who I am. I have won awards, been decorated, and am praised by my co-workers as a hard-working, competent, and well-rounded officer. I have run towards gunfire, wildfire, flood waters, and horrific car accidents to get innocent people out of harm's way. I have talked people out of killing themselves, embraced victims, and comforted children. I have arrested drug dealers, murderers, and sexual predators. I have used force on people when I had no other option, but for every time I had to fight, there were a hundred other times where I could have used force but chose not to. Most of all, I am part of a family. My family of brothers and sisters who also wear blue.

There is much more to who I am but, more importantly, there is a lot to what I am not. Of all of my brothers and sisters, I am not the best. I am not the fastest, most accurate, or most fit. I am not the most patient, best talker, or even the best looking. I have brothers and sisters who are all better at those things that I am. Although we are not perfect, together we are fierce. My brothers, sisters, and I make up the 99.9% of Law Enforcement officers in your state.

The reason that many of you do not know who I am is because I hide what I do in fear of retaliation from those who do not understand. I go to work when you are tucking the kids into bed. I come home when many of you are still asleep. Take comfort, though, that even if you do not know me, I will be there for you if you call. I will illuminate the dark if the day comes where you need the kind of help you believed was reserved for cinema.

Sometimes, you see me driving. I pass you quickly and you may curse me for speeding. Understand, though, that I am not speeding because I am late. I am not speeding just because I like driving fast. I am speeding because the wolves are fleet of foot and, to protect the flock, sheepdogs must be too. I did not turn my lights on to get through the intersection because I was impatient, I did it because someone is in danger.

I have sacrificed holidays, birthdays, special events, and family gatherings for you. My family knows that when they wake up in the morning, I may not be coming home anymore. I have insulated my family from that; financially, spiritually, and emotionally. Losing me would be hard for them to bear, but it is my hope that they would find some solace in the fact that my sacrifice was made so that evil may never show up at their door, or yours. My brothers and sisters have sacrificed themselves for this purpose and I was prepared to do so as well.

I know evil. I have seen it, felt it, and fought it. The only thing that I am guilty of ever discriminating against, is evil itself. Evil does not discriminate against your age, gender, race, or creed. Without my brothers, sisters, and I evil spreads unchecked. We have been here since our profession was established to fight evil.

But now, I am leaving.

I am leaving behind the career I have invested my entire personal and professional life in. I am not leaving because I am scared or dishonest. I am not leaving because I do not want to be transparent or I have been cursed at too much. I am leaving because my family is in danger.

The most recent legislation takes away a critical protection afforded to me in the performance of my duties, qualified immunity. For those of you who do not know, qualified immunity protects me personally from civil litigation (being sued) for performing my duties in accordance with the law, policies of my department, and ethical obligations. Qualified immunity does not protect me if I step outside of those boundaries. I am not entitled to qualified immunity if I violate the law, this fact has been clearly established in the courts. Without qualified immunity, my personal assets can be seized if a jury decides, for whatever reason, that I acted erroneously. Juries are unpredictable, at best. Juries are made up not of law enforcement officers, judicial officers, or government employees. Juries are made up of civilians who do not understand fully why I have to speed, fight, and yell. Being judged by a civilian jury is akin to having someone inspect your home who knows nothing about how to build a building.

The worst part? This legislation targets my family. My spouse, children, and I have spent years building our life to the best of our abilities. We have acquired a house, cars, and toys. The new legislation says that an inexperienced jury may take all of those things away from us on a whim, and that is a gamble that I cannot make. You may target me, my brothers, and my sisters. We are used to it. You may not target our families, they did not choose to sacrifice everything they have for those they do not know.

So, I am leaving. Where I will go, I do not know, but I cannot stay here. I wish you well, and pray that evil will never find your door, knowing full well what lurks in the darkness. Good luck and God bless.

Sincerely,

A Colorado Law Enforcement Officer

Dear Legislators of Colorado :

I can't help but feel that our Law Enforcement in the recent days has been abandoned by those they fight to protect. The actions of one do not represent the actions of all. I am disgusted and outraged by the actions of senseless murder of George Floyd by Officer Chauvin. With that said this bill is a knee jerk reaction written out of emotion to the current situation and does not think of the ramifications to those who put on a uniform every day and go out in to our communities to serve and protect those they took an oath to do. As a LEO wife with severe anxiety and PTSD I have already stayed up all night worried about my spouse and the job he performs but with this bill I do not foresee many nights of sleep for me and our children as we worry about not only his life and future but ours as well and what it would look like without him. Before serving his community as Law enforcement for almost 6 years he served his country in the Air Force. He has dedicated his life to serving and protecting the American people. His neighbors, his friends, all of you sitting in this room, and even those who hate the badge he wears. Still he puts on his uniform and goes to work to serve and protect.

These men and women have given their lives to the community, to men and women like you to protect you so that you can go through your day and life knowing someone has got your back. What about theirs? There are 246 law enforcement agencies in Colorado employing over 12,000 officers who day in and day out put their lives at risk to make sure yours is safe. The weight is heavy and can be seen on their faces when they come home to their families. To think we have one more added stress to an already heavy load for thousands of good men and women not only weighs on them but their spouses and children as well. Our children are seeing save a life kill the police signs, the riots, and actions taken by many to harm law enforcement and are scared their parents will not come home.

The amendments that were passed make me feel better that we have some support and the privacy of those filmed should continue to be kept private with the utmost respect. As a woman of past rape recalling the events is nothing short of traumatic and should not be made public knowledge unless consent to do so is given as it is your body and your story to give no one else's. Law enforcement sees most people on the worst day of their life and is there to not only protect them but others around them. They are supposed to be seen as a comfort and for many they are. There are bad cops. Just like there are criminals and they come in all ages, races, and even religions, but they don't stand for law enforcement as a whole. These good men and women who serve you are more disgusted by the recent actions taken by Officer Chauvin then you can imagine because they know what their badge stands for and it certainly wasn't that.

Please put your trust back in our law enforcement and vote no so they can continue to do their job and not be worried about their future.

Sincerely,

A LEO Wife

No to 217

To Whom it should concern,

I am having a hard time finding where to start. I want to make sure you first understand the caliber of one of the men you are willing to lose. My husband is a trooper for the state patrol; so long as law enforcement is still a respected and valued position. SB20-217 threatens that standing.

This is a man who has sat in the median of the highway to talk to a mentally ill woman who was lost and confused. He sat there with her in the grass, talking, listening and creating a relationship so she would trust him to help, and that he did. He was able to call multiple family members and friends and work on a plan to get her help, he drove her outside his area to make sure she was cared for. This same man visits schools all over his area, chatting with students of all ages, answering hard questions. These students trust him to answer questions about drugs, sex and alcohol. This man has burst into a building where a father was threatening to kill his two young daughters. This man has held multiple blood soaked children while waiting for an ambulance after a crash. This man has risked his life for this community, and this state, for over 7 years. And he hasn't done it alone. His brothers and sisters in blue all have stories like this. These men and women keep the dark at bay and bring light to those trapped by the darkness.

These men and women also have families at home, living a life without them. Countless birthdays have been celebrated without their dad. I'm not even sure the last time we celebrated our anniversary. When we are together we live a much different life than most. Even off duty my husband is recognized, so much so that we have a "safe word" that my husband says to warn us to give him distance from those who maybe a threat to his family. Whether off duty at home, running errands or on vacation, my husband has had to jump into action to help someone in need, again the safe words muttered so we knew to get to safety and let him do what needs to be done. All this sacrifice is second nature to a man given a God given purpose to serve and protect. And I wouldn't change a thing.

SB20-217 threatens to not only invade the privacy of Colorado citizens but put our officers in "guilty until proven innocent" situations and put a huge risk on our families. We, and many others, are single income families. Many of us have no choice because of the stress and crazy hours our spouses work. To be put on unpaid leave in the event of a malfunction, low battery, full data card or any other slew of problems that could arrive, is undoubtedly short sighted and unconstitutional. To be a government employee, putting their lives on the line for others, including you, and to have their family at risk of being sued because of a disgruntled citizen is something I can't even fathom.

This bill is simultaneously terrifying and infuriating. This man who I have watched serve his country and now his community is at risk from people who swore to listen to their constituents and protect their rights, and are now acting on the screams of the few and ignoring the pleas of the majority. Our community has been gathering in support of our local law enforcement, as have so many others. Those who love and respect our officers may be quiet, but we are many! I urge you to look at statistics on how many contacts police have on a daily basis and how FEW of those contacts turn into use of force and how even fewer of those end in death and again how even fewer aren't self defense or the defense of innocent civilians.

No one is ignoring the hate and evil that plagues our nation, but it is not a commonality with

our men and women who wear the badge. Evil can hide anywhere, but I urge you to find ways to weed out the evil without punishing our heroes and their families. Many police departments are struggling financially, more funding for better training and a larger pool of applicants is a better way and a great long term plan for our communities, state and nation. Just like we fight for teachers because they spend so much time with our youth, so do our officers. They are fighting for the same community, the same state we all love. They are molding our future as much, and maybe even more so than parents and teachers. They see young and old and everyone in between at their worst. We need them. We need them to go home to strong families who help them decompress and feel love after seeing all they see. Not everyone can carry what they carry for us. They need our help, our support and our love, now more than ever. They hold this country together, they walk that line between good and evil, they protect and serve, it's our turn to help them in this time of need, because helping them helps our community, our state and our country.

I beg you as a wife of a law enforcement officer and as a citizen to relies on peace, to please vote no on SB20-217. Our men and women in uniform are fighting for your safety. Fight for theirs.

Thank you,
A proud troopers wife

Representatives,

I believe you should pass SB20-217 because many lives have been taken at the hands of untrained law enforcement and racial profiling. My oldest brother Deramus Lemuel was young, gifted, talented -- and very well loved. His life was also taken by law enforcement. I hope no other family will have to go through what we've gone through.

I urge you to support this bill for justice for all.

Joshua Lemuel
Younger Brother of Deramus Lemuel
Colorado Springs, CO

One of the biggest questions that most of us are asked in our lives is what we want to be when we grow up. Most children have dreams of becoming teachers, doctors, firefighters....or police officers. I personally know at least 4 boys that are around the ages of 4-6 that talk about wanting to be a police officer when they grow up. Being a police officer is an admirable profession. We teach our children that cops are there to help us and get the bad guys off the streets. We teach our children that if they ever need help or have an emergency to call 9-11 and someone will save them.

My husband was one of those children that grew up wanting to be a police officer. In his younger years he did the junior academy and developed relationships with officers that he has kept for many years. As a matter of fact, the Chief of Police for the town in New Jersey where he was raised wrote a letter of recommendation for him when he applied to be a police officer in Colorado.

My husband's dreamed of becoming a cop because he wanted to make a difference in peoples lives. He grew up in a rough area in New Jersey and understood the hardships that many people face daily. He grew up in a neighborhood where as a white male, he was the minority. He watched his friends of color be targeted and treated differently, and he knew that as an officer he could make changes to how people were treated.

When I met my husband 7 years ago, he told me of his dreams of becoming a cop and we talked about what he would have to do to make those dreams come true. My husband had dropped out of high school and had never obtained his GED, so we knew this was the starting point. He went to the local community college and started to study and took the test and got his GED. He then enrolled at Arapahoe Community College for their Police Academy so that he could become POST certified. During the time that he was in school he was not able to work as he had to be in class 5 days a week, so he quit his job and I became our only provider. It was hard for us to make ends meet and we got ourselves in debt, but we knew that these were sacrifices we had to make in order for his dreams to come true.

After his completion of school, he started to apply with the local departments and after several interviews and testing for different departments in the area, he was hired on with a local sheriff's office as a Deputy Sheriff. He has now been a police officer for three years, and although everyday I worry about him, I also could not be more proud of where he is at with his career.

The reason that I tell you our background story is so you can understand where we come from and how hard we have worked to get where we are today. We both have given up a lot, got ourselves into debt (which we are now working hard to pay off), and have worked hard to get into and adapt to the police life. Until this past week I have fully supported my husband being in law enforcement. It was not until this bill went to legislation and we read the impacts this could potentially have that we began to discuss other options. Not because we don't agree that there needs to be a change or that law enforcement needs to be held more accountable, but because of how this would negatively impact our family. We are new parents, just bought our first home, and we are still in the beginning stages of starting our lives together. We are working hard to pay off debts and save for our futures, meaning that if we are sued, even up to \$25,000, that would have a detrimental impact on our lives and our future. We could not afford that and would lose everything we have, meaning that for the safety of our family we would have to make the decision for my husband to leave his department because we cannot take the risk of losing it all for a "what if" scenario.

We need the community and police to work together. This bill shows police officers that they are seen as the "bad guys" and they are not supported. Many officers are ready to leave and find different careers as it is hard to wake up and go to work everyday to defend a community that has so much

hatred for you. These men and women risk their lives for us everyday and in return we are showing them that we don't trust them?

We are fighting for equal rights. We are fighting for black men to not be targeted by police officers. We are fighting for EVERYONE to be created equal. So lets remember that police are apart of the equation as well. If we should not judge based on the color of a person's skin, then we also should not judge all based on the uniform the put on. There are bad cops out there and they need to be held accountable, but please do not push out the good cops in the process.

Take the time so slow down, don't react out of anger and fear. Take the time to think of how this bill can best be written where all can be fair. Please use your voice to stand for the good guys that are truly trying to make a difference and protect our communities. Please do not put us in situations where we have to decide between protecting ourselves and pursuing our dreams. VOTE NO TODAY! We need you to be our voice!

Thank you!

A concerned Police Wife

Miranda

06.10.2020

To whom it may concern:

I am the wife of a law enforcement officer. We have been together for 15 years, married 5 and have created a beautiful family of three children. He grew up from a rebellious teenager into the polished, articulate, good-hearted man that stands before us today. He is a police officer. He joined the force to protect and serve his community. To protect and serve young people who were just like him. In his 7 years of service to the force, he has helped countless people, counseled countless kids and served honorably and with integrity.

I feel in my heart that change needs to happen in our world. For our children and for our children's children. Although we know that things are ever changing, the changes that we create today may have a long lasting effect for the future. My focus is my family's well-being. I want to ensure that my husband, who has given so much to his community, gets the protection he deserves in return. I want to ensure that whatever bill is passed, it protects him and his livelihood. It seems to me that this bill is catering the public and condemning the good, honest and hardworking police officers that put their lives on the line day in and day out. Please consider the fact that there are more police officers working with honesty and integrity than there are bad ones. I agree that the bad police officers need to be weeded out; pointless shootings and killings MUST stop. Police departments need to get the funding they need for mental health assessments and support and continued training, not to get funding cuts. That will only perpetrate the cycle of bad policing. I know that we are all championing for some good systematic change, but it cannot be at the expense of police officer's well-being, or police funding.

Here are my specific concerns as well as some good things in the bill:

Choke holds need to be eliminated. There is no logical reason for law enforcement to use them.

Law enforcement officers that are fired for misconduct in one entity cannot be hired by a department somewhere else. That is a good thing in the bill.

Body cameras need to be used. However, if an officer's bodycam fell off, the bill presumes that the officer is hiding something, and he or she has the burden of proof to show. The language in the bill needs to be changed to say that if there is a blank spot on the recording, the officer did nothing wrong. It also requires those videos that need to be released to the public within 14 days. This could put witnesses, investigations, minors, and victims in jeopardy. We need to remember that people call the police during the most vulnerable times in their life, and these recordings should not be exposed for the public to see (i.e. sexual assault, domestic violence, CPS investigations). There is also a funding issue for smaller rural entities that need to be addressed.

A concerning aspect of this bill is forcing an officer to collect data on whoever he or she makes contact with. For example, if it is a traffic stop, the officer is to document the race, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, mental health status, housing status, and veteran status. I don't know how any officer can be asked to invade a person's privacy to actually enhance profiling.

I also have concerns with forcing an officer to pay \$100,000 if there is a lawsuit or settlement. In my county of residence, many of the officers make around \$50,000. If an officer is sued and the entity he

works for settles outside of court, which is common practice due to the financial cost of a lawsuit, the officer is now responsible for \$100,000. The bill specified that the officer cannot have an insurance company or their employer pay that obligation which would likely bankrupt most police families. No other industry or profession including the medical field has that obligation and it is unreasonable here.

I will now share with you a conversation that I had with my four year old son that has been more enlightening than most of what I've heard most adults say:

ME: Son, what does your daddy do for work?

SON: He makes sure bad guys don't get him. He might shoot them if they are really bad. (Even my son knows that there are bad people out to get him.)

ME: What good stuff does your dad do?

SON: He takes care of the house and the grass. Buys me remote control cars. He protects people. He helps people when they are in trouble. Arrests bad guys. He goes to their house if they need something.

ME: Is your dad a hero?

SON: He takes care of us. He doesn't let bad guys get him. He helps kids out of their treehouses. He saves people's moms. He is a brave police. He's a hero.

DAUGHTER: (chimes in, 2 years old) Punch the bad guys! Take care of homes.

SON: I want to be brave and strong. I want to be a police officer like daddy cause he's brave and strong. He's cool. They're cool.

My husband is my son's hero. Just like other police officers are for their children and their communities. If a four year old can understand that most police officers are inherently good, then I am sure that other people can help differentiate between good and bad officers as well. Most are, as my four-year-old stated "cool." Most are here upstand the oath that they took, protect and serve.

I politely ask you to consider what this bill will do to the morale of the good, well-intentioned, honorable police officers that we have in our great state. They need to feel like they are protected and supported, not chastised, discriminated against or targeted. Only then, will our officers feel safe, and our police departments be able to move towards protecting and serving the way policing and law enforcement was intended. Thank you and I appreciate your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A Police Officer's Wife

06.10.2020

To whom it may concern:

I am the wife of a law enforcement officer. We have been together for 15 years, married 5 and have created a beautiful family of three children. He grew up from a rebellious teenager into the polished, articulate, good-hearted man that stands before us today. He is a police officer. He joined the force to protect and serve his community. To protect and serve young people who were just like him. In his 7 years of service to the force, he has helped countless people, counseled countless kids and served honorably and with integrity.

I feel in my heart that change needs to happen in our world. For our children and for our children's children. Although we know that things are ever changing, the changes that we create today may have a long lasting effect for the future. My focus is my family's well-being. I want to ensure that my husband, who has given so much to his community, gets the protection he deserves in return. I want to ensure that whatever bill is passed, it protects him and his livelihood. It seems to me that this bill is catering the public and condemning the good, honest and hardworking police officers that put their lives on the line day in and day out. Please consider the fact that there are more police officers working with honesty and integrity than there are bad ones. I agree that the bad police officers need to be weeded out; pointless shootings and killings MUST stop. Police departments need to get the funding they need for mental health assessments and support and continued training, not to get funding cuts. That will only perpetrate the cycle of bad policing. I know that we are all championing for some good systematic change, but it cannot be at the expense of police officer's well-being, or police funding.

Here are my specific concerns as well as some good things in the bill:

Choke holds need to be eliminated. There is no logical reason for law enforcement to use them.

Law enforcement officers that are fired for misconduct in one entity cannot be hired by a department somewhere else. That is a good thing in the bill.

Body cameras need to be used. However, if an officer's bodycam fell off, the bill presumes that the officer is hiding something, and he or she has the burden of proof to show. The language in the bill needs to be changed to say that if there is a blank spot on the recording, the officer did nothing wrong. It also requires those videos that need to be released to the public within 14 days. This could put witnesses, investigations, minors, and victims in jeopardy. We need to remember that people call the police during the most vulnerable times in their life, and these recordings should not be exposed for the public to see (i.e. sexual assault, domestic violence, CPS investigations). There is also a funding issue for smaller rural entities that need to be addressed.

A concerning aspect of this bill is forcing an officer to collect data on whoever he or she makes contact with. For example, if it is a traffic stop, the officer is to document the race, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, mental health status, housing status, and veteran status. I don't know how any officer can be asked to invade a person's privacy to actually enhance profiling.

I also have concerns with forcing an officer to pay \$100,000 if there is a lawsuit or settlement. In my county of residence, many of the officers make around \$50,000. If an officer is sued and the entity he

works for settles outside of court, which is common practice due to the financial cost of a lawsuit, the officer is now responsible for \$100,000. The bill specified that the officer cannot have an insurance company or their employer pay that obligation which would likely bankrupt most police families. No other industry or profession including the medical field has that obligation and it is unreasonable here.

I will now share with you a conversation that I had with my four year old son that has been more enlightening than most of what I've heard most adults say:

ME: Son, what does your daddy do for work?

SON: He makes sure bad guys don't get him. He might shoot them if they are really bad. (Even my son knows that there are bad people out to get him.)

ME: What good stuff does your dad do?

SON: He takes care of the house and the grass. Buys me remote control cars. He protects people. He helps people when they are in trouble. Arrests bad guys. He goes to their house if they need something.

ME: Is your dad a hero?

SON: He takes care of us. He doesn't let bad guys get him. He helps kids out of their treehouses. He saves people's moms. He is a brave police. He's a hero.

DAUGHTER: (chimes in, 2 years old) Punch the bad guys! Take care of homes.

SON: I want to be brave and strong. I want to be a police officer like daddy cause he's brave and strong. He's cool. They're cool.

My husband is my son's hero. Just like other police officers are for their children and their communities. If a four year old can understand that most police officers are inherently good, then I am sure that other people can help differentiate between good and bad officers as well. Most are, as my four-year-old stated "cool." Most are here upstand the oath that they took, protect and serve.

I politely ask you to consider what this bill will do to the morale of the good, well-intentioned, honorable police officers that we have in our great state. They need to feel like they are protected and supported, not chastised, discriminated against or targeted. Only then, will our officers feel safe, and our police departments be able to move towards protecting and serving the way policing and law enforcement was intended. Thank you and I appreciate your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A Police Officer's Wife

June 9th, 2020

Dear Rep. Herod and Rep. Gonzales-Gutierrez,

I support your bill, the Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Bill. I am a mixed-race individual who was born from a beautiful immigrant from Mexico. While I love my country, I love my state of Colorado much more. I love the prominence of the mountains that strictly protrude from the rolling, grassy plains below. I admire the crisp running rivers that dance along canyon floors, providing water and nourishment to wildlife and livestock. Looming over this pastoral scene, I do not love the fact that the law enforcement has qualified immunity.

Qualified immunity ruins the pristine embodiment of what makes Colorado a home to many individuals. Qualified immunity injures the blacks, the latinos, the native americans, other people of color, and the whites. It damages everyone. Why? It does not discriminate between the good law enforcement officers (who truly serve and protect) from the bad police officers who use their stature to carry out their own internal biases and agendas, harming those in their way.

Qualified immunity, as you and I are aware of, is a doctrine introduced by the Supreme Court of the United States in *Harlow v. Fitzgerald*, without voter approval, like every Supreme Court decision. 457 U.S. 800 (1982). *Harlow* relies on the reasonable person test in law, where the measure of culpability of a police officer stems from if an everyday person who was placed in the police officer's position would act the same as the officer did. *Id.* at 818. The Supreme Court handed down this rule because they were concerned about deterring police officers from performing their duties because they were caught in the mess of litigation. *Id.* at 814.

Prior to *Harlow*, qualified immunity was granted by the Supreme Court if: (1) the police officer had a good faith belief that his action was lawful and (2) the conduct was objectively reasonable, as an exception to the *Civil action for deprivation of rights*, 42 USC § 1983 (1871). By the way, 42 USC § 1983 was a congressional statute that voters in that time were able to hold Congress accountable should they have had any qualms with this law by voting out members of congress.

Harlow, to the detriment of the good people of the United States, removed the culpable mental state of the individual and provided: “government officials performing discretionary functions **generally are shielded from liability** for civil damages insofar as their conduct does not violate clearly established statutory or constitutional rights of which a **reasonable person would have known.**” 457 U.S. at 818. This precedent has been abused by government officials defending police officers who truly had a culpable mental state by giving immunity to their unreasonable conduct.

For example, in 2019, in Aurora, Colorado, Elijah McClain, a 23-year old man, was beaten to death by police officers, sent to the emergency room, where he was later pronounced brain dead three days later. No probable cause was found, he was simply walking home, and yet the police officers were not fired nor charged with any crime because qualified immunity was used as a defense by Colorado government officials on a review board. Another individual, Devon Bailey, a 19-year old man, who started to run from the police, was gunned down immediately by Colorado Springs Police Department. Why did the police officers feel compelled to resort to deadly force to stop him when other options were available? Why was the immediate response to shoot him which any reasonable person knows has the potential to lead to death? Their response: they saw a gun. Reality: transcripts show that there was no such gun. They had no probable cause to injure him and kill him. He was not demonstrating a capacity to commit a harm against them, he was in fact running away and they shot him in the back. At the end, qualified immunity protected them, and worse, sent a signal to other officers that they could escalate to deadly force without significant consequence.

It is time to remove precedent that has led to terrible outcomes and abuse of the law. The time is now to change a law that has allowed police officers to act as “judges, juries, and executioners” and provide people with the common defense and the promotion of the general welfare. The United States Constitution does not provide for qualified immunity in the first place, much less absolute immunity. This bill you have drafted as an individual who was elected by the people and voters are still able to hold you accountable unlike the Supreme Court. This

bill allows members of the public to hold trigger happy, power hungry, and racist police officers accountable.

Your bill is a good place to start dismantling the harms being done onto the people the police have sworn to protect and serve. Powerful elements of your bill are “(1) creating a unit in the Attorney General’s office to investigate and determine whether to indict police officers who killed or caused serious bodily injury to others, (2) mandatory data collection and reporting on police stops and use of force, (3) increased use of summons instead of custodial arrests, and (4) limitations on dynamic (forced) entries into people’s homes and a prohibition on no-knock warrants.” This bill together with the recent District of Colorado case, *Abay v. City of Denver* (where Judge Jackson granted in part a temporary restraining order enjoining specifically Denver Police Department from employing chemical weapons or projectiles of any kind from being directed at peaceful protestors, placed a requirement on officers to wear body cameras and not obstructing the camera, and involves a substantial notice requirement for a crowd to disperse rather than shooting into it indiscriminately to get it to disperse) is a wonderful way to tear down the use of qualified immunity as a defense and protects the people who call Colorado home by ensuring police officers are following rules and promoting general welfare. No. 20-cv-01616-RBJ, 2020 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 99523, *13-15 (D. Colo, June 5, 2020). I wholly support your bill. I hope you can use this letter whether as an inspiration to keep fighting for acceptance of this bill or to use as evidence in support of your bill when speaking to the House and the Senate in the next few days.

Sincerely,

Jesi Jones

JD Candidate 2022 at Sturm College of Law

P.S. I in no way suggest that Sturm College of Law is supporting my letter.

Dear Legislator,

June 9, 2020

My name is Tiffanie Moorman and I am not only the wife of a Peace Officer, but I am also the daughter to one. I am also a mother of two children. I very rarely get to have a name for myself, besides "mom" or "Sgt. Moorman's wife." In this case, I am using this opportunity to stand up and put myself on the front lines to voice my side of how this Bill can and will affect my family. I wish I could be with my blue family today, but unfortunately; I did not feel comfortable due to the target that all Law Enforcement families seem to have on them right now. I am the type of person that likes to dive deep into thoughts and really explain myself. I know this testimony will be long, but I promise it is worth the read. From the start, thank you for taking the time to read it and think about all that I say.

Before I begin, I would like to thank you with a full heart for revisiting Bill 20-217 and adding so many amendments and clarifying so many things. I personally do feel better with the way things are written than from when this was first presented. I am still flooded with thoughts of fear that a large part of my family could be taken away, given that someone can personally sue my husband over a work-related situation. I am a stay at home mother. We have a daughter with special needs, and it made more sense for me to be home than causing more stress with working outside the home. My husband's income is everything my family is based on. He is the sole provider, the bread winner, he is it. We do not have \$25,000 laying around. There are months when we plan our meals based on the amount of cash that is in our wallets. We do not live frivolous lives; we live within our means and money is still tight. Many of you could be thinking that the good cops have nothing to worry about. I beg to differ with that. Who is to say, it will not happen? Who is to say my husband will not get the short end of the stick and we are left with next to nothing? Another part that brings pain to my heart is the wording regarding the officer and not having their body camera on. Presumption that the officer is guilty until proven innocent is crushing, especially since a criminal is innocent until proven guilty. How can Peace Officer's protect others when they are not protected themselves?

I am emailed all of you what it is to be on my side, as the wife and the mother married to a Peace Officer. Today is my time to stand proud and tell you what it is like to be on my husband's side and our family as a unit that works together in support of our Blue Family.

I am prouder than ever to tell my husband that "I've got his 6" right now. At the same token, I'm scared to leave my house, I'm scared to have the kids play outside alone, I'm scared to send them to a friends house, I'm scared to have them at home, I'm scared to go in public wearing a "thin blue line" shirt, I'm scared to wear short sleeves because of the tattoo I have with my husbands badge number on it on my arm, etc. These proud moments and moments of fear have stemmed from the shooting of George Floyd. They have stemmed from the way the general population and media now portrays all Law Enforcement as evil. On May 31st our neighbors informed us that they saw people parked outside our house and they were taking pictures of not only our home, but my husbands marked patrol car. When it was time for bed and after my husband and a friend took his patrol car to his office, he slept on the couch with a loaded rifle in order to better protect his family, and the kids, dogs and myself slept in our room with the door locked. His patrol car used to be parked in our driveway out of pride for who he was. As my husband is still proud to be an officer that swore to serve and protect the citizens of our community, he now does that with a stronger fear that he will not come back home to us, a stronger fear for his life, a stronger fear of leaving me alone, a widow with 2 kids and car payments, a mortgage, etc. As the wife, the mother, the momma bear; I now have a fear of who took pictures of my house, my

safe place for my kids to play and what in the world are they doing with them? My front door was always open, and it is always now locked. This may sound silly, but I am constantly having to run my AC because I will not leave the back door open to get cool air in my house. The back door is now locked all the time as well. Again, this is now our new normal all because of my husbands' job. All because of 4 bad cops. My husband is not a bad cop. My husband has spent almost 13 years at the same agency. My husband is respected within his agency. My husband is a supervisor and had people bidding to join his team because they were so excited to work for him, knowing they hated the shift they would be on. My husband is the commander of the negotiations team. My husband loves his job. My husband runs to danger when others run away. My husband has paid for countless meals and hotel rooms for people that needed something to eat or a warm place to stay while on duty. In turn, going without dinner himself. My husband does not get a "lunch break" or a "dinner break", he basically drinks water for 10 hours. Sometimes this is due to the fact that he is busy, but other times because he won't go into a food establishment in uniform or he won't park long enough to enjoy his meal because of the fear of someone coming up behind him and shooting him in the head. With all of this, my husband still loves his job and told me just yesterday that he still cannot see himself doing anything else. Being a cop is his passion.

Fear has not stopped with the pictures being taken of our house. This incident resulted in taking down our blue lights on the front of our home, taking down the blue ribbons around said lights, taking a thin blue line keychain off the outside of my purse and taking a thin blue line bracelet off my rear view mirror. I also have a tattoo on my lower arm with a blue heart, a heart beating symbol and my husband's badge number. I know debate to myself if I should wear long sleeves when I go out in public. Is my tattoo and support for my husband, going to cause me harm in the end, is the thought that goes through my mind now, when it did not before.

I am constantly told by others to not live in fear, but how can I not? How can I wear my shirt that states "I married my hero" with a thin blue line on it, out in public anymore? I guess I could, but should I? Should I take that chance with the increased target on my families back? Should I take the chance of not coming home from the store to my family, because I wore a certain shirt?

My husband does all that I have stated in the previous paragraph, 4-5 days a week, 40-50 hours a day, my husband wears a shirt and badge that he was given after raising his right hand stating that he swears to protect the citizens around him. Citizens that are total strangers. Not only does my husband uphold this promise he made almost 13 years ago with a full heart, but he does it with a messed up back. He carries around about 100 pounds of gear around his waist. This gear is his to use to protect himself. He has a hard time getting up and down from bed in the morning because his back is so tight. Yet, he still goes to work with a smile and a heart of gold. My husband is called a pig, told to "f-off", etc. and he still does his job with a smile and the same heart of gold. His own family has told him they do not support law enforcement and he still go to work with that same smile and that same heart because he knows that he is not the problem. My husband is a good cop.

I pray for peace for Mr. Floyd's family as they continue to grieve for the loss of their son, father and friend. I pray for the wives and the family members of the four cops that killed Mr. Floyd as I cannot imagine being in their shoes right now. I, in no way support the decision the four officers made on Memorial Day to end someone's life, but I do pray that they find it in their heart to admit they did something wrong and I pray that justice is served for them and the crime they all committed. I pray for

all of you, that you have the ability to look at the situation in front of us and continue to ask yourself, what can we do to make this better for EVERYONE and not just one race. I pray for all of my blue family, that they are safe and feel comfortable with who they are and who they chose to be when they raised their right hand and took the oath to serve and protect others. I pray that some day each and everyone of us can look at each other and think to ourselves, that person is the same as me, no matter their skin color, where they are from, or the language they speak. Every single person in this world can change, it is up to that person if they want to or not. My life, my husband's life and my kids' lives should not be looked down upon due to the uniform that my husband wears. Since that horrible day in May when Mr. Floyd was killed, my life, my husband's life and my kids' lives do not matter to others as much as they did before.

Another thought... All the feelings of fear, being proud, being scared, the fear of the unknown.... Multiply that by 2. Not only is my husband a Peace Officer, but so is my father. I not only now live in a greater fear of losing my husband, but also my dad. My dad who held me in his arms after I was born, my dad who spent countless hours on the softball field with me, my dad who loves me. I not only have 1 hero, but I have the privilege of having two and they do not wear capes, they wear a badge. I will continue to voice my thoughts, hopes and dreams for our law enforcement community until my voice can no longer be heard.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for your support for my husband and his decision to still wear his badge and do his job in order to keep you and everyone else safe within the state of Colorado.

Respectfully,

Tiffanie Moorman

Thank you madame chair and to the committee for hearing my testimony today in support of SB20-217. My name is Morgan Royal and I am the Campaigns Director at New Era Colorado. We are a local nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to mobilize and empower a new generation to participate in our democracy and make Colorado a better place for everyone.

The recent police murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and the subsequent protests across the country are shining a much-needed spotlight on the reality of police violence against Black communities in this country. Colorado is no exception. Elijah McClain and De'von Bailey are just two community members who were murdered by Colorado police within the last year. Our communities have also been fractured by police violence and justice is rarely, if ever, served. SB20-217 would allow us to hold police officers accountable for their actions by taking several important steps, including requiring public reporting on policing, reining in the use of deadly force by officers, and preventing the rehiring of bad officers. In particular, the end of qualified immunity may serve as the greatest reform for the police force—holding officers accountable to their actions just like the rest of us.

To be clear: this legislation won't solve everything. We know that violence against Black communities is built into the very purpose of the police force, and until we shift to a model of community support instead of militant policing we won't see an end to the violence. But putting forth solutions that rein in police instead of allowing them complete freedom and lack of accountability is a way to mitigate harm and open the possibility of justice.

You've seen that the movement for justice in Colorado and across the country has been primarily led by young, Black organizers. My generation cares deeply about racial justice. Young people in Colorado show up for each and every election—and we demand our legislators center the voices of Black and Brown communities fighting for their dignity and humanity in this moment.

This bill would serve as a critical step that we can take as a state to address the violence that people of color, especially Black folks, face so that we can protect our communities and ensure that police are held accountable to the public for their actions. I strongly urge for your support of SB20-217.



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Derbyshire, England, LEAP UK

Date: June 10th, 2020

Re: SB 217 - Police Accountability

Position: SUPPORT

To: The Colorado House Finance Committee

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I represent myself, having served as a sheriff's deputy and corrections officer, and as a speaker for the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP). LEAP is a nonprofit group of police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety, promoting alternatives to arrest and incarceration, addressing the root causes of crime, and working toward healing police-community relations.

I support SB 217 because it will help improve police-community trust. The police are only as strong as our relationships with the public, because we prevent and solve crime based on information from witnesses and victims. When our officers come knocking, nobody will open the door and talk if they're angry because they feel the police are not accountable for their actions. Victims won't even report crime-- a recent report found that more than half of all violent crimes went unreported between 2006 and 2010.¹ To increase crime reporting and information sharing, we need to take action to improve police-community trust.

People lose trust in us when officers engage in misconduct and their departments fail to take responsibility for it. In particular, officer-involved shootings are prime opportunities to build public trust. It is crucial that we reach out to community members and show them — not just tell them — that we are committed to investigating and holding officers accountable.

Failing to share misconduct information about a few officers makes the public suspicious of all officers. Today, we are lumping the honest, hard-working police officers in with officers who have betrayed the public trust, yet who are being rehired by other agencies unaware of the officer's past.

The vast majority of officers serve our communities every day and do not abuse their authority -- and they have nothing to worry about with this bill. In fact, improving transparency and accountability can make police safer, because our officers are safest when community members have our backs.

SB 217 is a practical solution to prioritize accountability and public trust and strengthen relationships with the communities we serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience in support of this bill.

Carrie Roberts
Former Sheriff's Deputy, Arapahoe County
Speaker, Law Enforcement Action Partnership

1. "Victimizations Not Reported to the Police, 2006-2010." <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/vnrp0610.pdf>. Accessed 10 Jun. 2020.

June 19, 2020

Re: SB 20-2017

Dear House Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of **SB20-217**. I have worked with black and brown youth for over 20 years and I cannot begin to recount all the stories my students would tell me of when they were mistreated by the police. It happens so often in our neighborhoods that it has become almost a twisted rite of passage. I am tired of having our black and brown community treated like third class citizens in this country by a police force that too often cross the line.

I know we need law enforcement, I do not have delusions of a police free utopia but we DO NOT need a militarized police force with no accountability to its citizens. If a police officer uses excessive force, he should be held accountable, I should be able to sue if my rights get violated, we should get access to their body camera footage!

What this bill is asking for is not a radical idea, it is simply asking for the police to not be above the law. In all honesty I have not called the police in situations where I probably should have because I do not want to be responsible if they react by using deadly force. I have to ask myself is it worth it, my answer has been no!!! I should be able to call the police and not be scared of what might happen. I should count on them to handle the situation in a professional way and I should be guaranteed that if they don't, they will be disciplined and not just transferred to another precinct with a slap on the wrist.

I am tired of watching and hearing the stories. I am tired of burying brown and black bodies. I am tired of the police being protected. I am tired of having to fight to defend our civil rights. I am tired of inaction. I am tired of being disappointed in the system. I am tired of being angry. The time for change is now and I trust your committee will do the right thing!

Respectfully,

Charleen Ramirez-Mares

Brady
840 First St. NE Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20002



Testimony of Christian Heyne, Vice President of Policy, Brady
Testimony in Support of S.B. 20-217
Before Colorado House Finance Committee
June 10th, 2020

Distinguished Members of Colorado House Finance Committee,

Founded in 1974, Brady works across Congress, courts, and communities, uniting gun owners and non-gun owners alike, to take action, not sides, and end America's gun violence epidemic. Our organization today carries the name of Jim Brady, who was shot and severely injured in the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Jim and his wife, Sarah, led the fight to pass federal legislation requiring background checks for gun sales. Brady continues to uphold Jim and Sarah's legacy by uniting Americans from coast to coast, red and blue, young and old, liberal and conservative, to combat the epidemic of gun violence.

Brady maintains that police violence is gun violence, and as Americans take to the street, from coast to coast, Brady joins the call for law enforcement reform, systemic change, and racial justice. **We strongly urge the committee to support S.B. 20-217, a comprehensive bill that reforms policing and use of force, mandates transparency, and facilitates accountability.** Each of these approaches is necessary to improve the system of policing and to effectuate meaningful change. While this bill alone is not a solution for the persistent racial disparities that exist in our policing and criminal justice system, it is a step in the right direction.

Police Violence in America

Compared to other countries, the U.S. suffers a disproportionate amount of police violence. In 2019, over 1000 people were killed by law enforcement.¹ In fact, in every year since 2013 over 1,000 people have been killed by the police in America; most were shot to death.² As noted by renowned criminologist Franklin Zimring, "American police kill not only more often than other developed world police but at a

¹ See Rob Picheta & Henrik Pettersson, *American Police Shoot, Kill and Imprison More People Than Other Developed Countries. Here's the Data*, CNN, June 8, 2020, available at <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/us/us-police-floyd-protests-country-comparisons-intl/index.html>.

² Spencer Bokot-Lindell, *Why is Police Brutality Still Happening?*, N.Y. TIMES (May 28, 2020), available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/opinion/minneapolis-police-brutality.html>.

vastly higher rate than any nation the United States would want to measure itself against.”³ While America’s exceptional rate of police violence impacts all ethnic and racial groups in the country, “African American men and women, American Indian/Alaska Native men and women, and Latino men face higher lifetime risk of being killed by police than do their white peers.”⁴ While death at the hands of police is the ultimate degradation, people of color, and especially Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Latinx people face numerous aggressions in their interaction with law enforcement each and every day.

As Pulitzer Prize Winner and “1619 Project” creator Nikkole Hannah-Jones wrote, “[p]olice killings are just the worst manifestations of countless slights and indignities that build until there’s an explosion. Since 1935, nearly every so-called race riot in the U.S. — and there have been more than 100 — has been sparked by a police incident ... This can be an act of brutality, or a senseless killing. But the underlying causes run much deeper. Police, because they interact in Black communities every day, *are often seen as the face of larger systems of inequality* in the justice system, employment, education, and housing.”⁵

Indeed, there is no shortage of infamous incidents of police violence in recent years targeting Black americans: George Floyd of Minnesota; Breonna Taylor of Kentucky; Dreasjon Reed of Indiana; Eric Garner of New York; Michael Brown of Missouri; Philando Castile of Minnesota; and many more. These are only recent examples of a crisis that has plagued America since its inception.⁶ And Colorado is not immune from police violence murder of unarmed individuals. Between 2013 and 2019, 227 people were killed by the police in Colorado.⁷ In addition to the individuals killed by police, misconduct,⁸ racial profiling⁹, and a dramatic lack of accountability¹⁰ are rampant in law enforcement agencies across the country, including in Colorado.¹¹

³ FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING, *WHEN POLICE KILL* 87 (Harv. U. Press 2017).

⁴ Frank Edwards et al., *Risk of Being Killed by Police Use of Force in the United States by Age, Race–Ethnicity, and Sex*, 116 PNAS 34 (2019).

⁵ Nikole Hannah-Jones, *Yes, Black America Feels the Police. Here’s Why.*, PACIFIC STANDARD MAGAZINE (Apr. 10, 2018), available at <https://psmag.com/social-justice/why-black-america-feels-the-police>

⁶ Chelsea Hansen, *Slave Patrols: An Early Form of American Policing*, NAT’L L. ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM BLOG, Jul. 10, 2019 available at <https://lawenforcementmuseum.org/2019/07/10/slave-patrols-an-early-form-of-american-policing/>

⁷ See Mapping Police Violence at <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/states>.

⁸ See, e.g., Kristen Swilley, *Citizen Complaint Authority Faces Backlog of More Than 100 Cases of Alleged Police Misconduct*, ABC 9 WCPO, June 8, 2020, available at <https://www.wcpo.com/news/local-news/hamilton-county/cincinnati/citizen-complaint-authority-faces-backlog-of-more-than-100-cases-of-alleged-police-misconduct>.

⁹ See, e.g., AM. C.L. UNION, *The Persistence of Racial and Ethnic Profiling in the United States* (2009), available at <https://www.aclu.org/report/persistence-racial-and-ethnic-profiling-united-states>.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Melissa Chan, *A Police Officer Killed Their Mother, and Her Sons Want to Know Why He Hasn’t Faced Trial*, TIME (July 18, 2019), available at <https://time.com/5628206/police-shooting-trial-knowlton-garner>.

¹¹ See, e.g., Kieran Nicholson, *Aurora Police Settle Lawsuits from ACLU Colorado for \$75,000 in Alleged Racial Profiling Incidents*, DENVER POST (June 28, 2018), available at <https://www.denverpost.com/2018/06/28/settlements-aurora-police-racial-profiling>; see also Noelle Phillips, *Say Their Names: A Look at Controversial Police Killings in Colorado*, DENVER POST (June 6, 2020), available at <https://www.denverpost.com/2020/06/06/controversial-police-deaths-in-colorado>; John Kelly & Mark Nichols, *Read the Records of More than 300 Colorado Cops Banned for Misconduct*, USA TODAY (Apr. 26, 2019), available at <https://www.coloradoan.com/in-depth/news/crime/2019/04/26/police-misconduct-records-colorado-cops-internal-investigations-open-records-use-of-force/3573605002>.

Although police violence is a result of complex racial and structural inequities, this violence is not inevitable or inexorable. S.B. 20-217 is not the sole solution to preventing police violence, but the policies and processes it sets forth make for an important first step toward reducing police violence in Colorado through reform, transparency, and accountability.

Reforms for Policing and Use of Force:

In demanding that law enforcement change their practices, it is imperative that the legislature proactively sets standards for what is and is not permitted and outlines what actions in the line of duty constitutes misconduct. As outlined below, S.B. 20-217 works to do this.

There is no standard in policing that affects more lives than the standard for the use of deadly force. Without clear and strict standards, individuals are vulnerable to the use of deadly force in situations that may be otherwise deescalated or handled using a variety of other tactics. Current Colorado law allows a law enforcement officer to use lethal force under several broad and varied circumstances. This bill's terms properly limit the permissible use of deadly force by outlining specific instances when deadly force is and is absolutely not permitted and by mandating that, if possible, law enforcement give sufficient warning of their intent to use their firearm or other lethal force.¹²

This bill also bars the use of chokeholds which have been proven to cause serious injury and death,¹³ establishes limitations on the use of *any* physical force, and creates a duty to intervene. The institution, implementation, and enforcement of each of these limitations and duties on permissive force are necessary to prevent police killings and serious injury to civilians and to ensure accountability when police use of force is excessive or unlawful.

This bill also aims to proactively reduce the racial disparities in policing by requiring that officers have an objective justification for making a stop, and that officers report the race of the subject stopped. Data has shown how the implementation of stop and frisk and similar policies that encourage police to stop and search people indiscriminately lead to Black Americans having greater contacts with police. None of these policies have been associated with an increase in public safety, or decrease in crime.¹⁴

These types of reforms are key in preventing unnecessary use of force and racial disparities in policing because they establish clear boundaries for appropriate and inappropriate actions for law enforcement in their scope of everyday duties.

Transparency Concerning Police Practices and Misconduct:

The critical changes in police practice set forth by S.B. 20-217 would be undermined without transparency, which historically has been severely lacking with regards to law enforcement in Colorado.

¹² The addition of “use” could especially helpful in reducing unnecessary police violence, as a study found that there was no firearm present in 44% of fatal police shootings. To know that a suspect will *use* a deadly weapon, it is likely that a reasonable officer will need confirmation that the weapon exists. *See, e.g.*, FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING, *WHEN POLICE KILL* (Harv. U. Press 2017).

¹³ *See, e.g.*, *City of Los Angeles v. Lyons*, 461 U.S. 95, 116 (Marshall, J., dissenting) (“It is undisputed that chokeholds pose a high and unpredictable risk of serious injury or death...”).

¹⁴ *See* NAACP, *Pathways to Police Reform Community Mobilization Toolkit* 7 (2016); NAACP, *Born Suspect* (2014).

For example, one study concluded that “Coloradans remain largely in the dark with regard to allegations and investigations of police misconduct.”¹⁵ Police officers are public officials working for the public. Thus, the need for trust and accountability is integral.

To understand, evaluate, and correct problematic behavior and patterns of behavior, it is imperative that researchers, legislators, advocates, and law enforcement agencies have all of the relevant information and data. Currently, there are large gaps in what the public knows about important aspects of the behavior of local law enforcement agencies due to the lack of compulsory reporting requirements and the lack of standardization of how police departments collect and maintain their data. Without this basic information, it is impossible to know if the current laws are being followed — this lack of transparency frequently creates a mistrust in the police.¹⁶

S.B. 20-217 will increase reporting and transparency on material facts and data. For example, reporting of police use of force and stops conducted by police officers will make it easier to identify officers acting contrary to permissible regulations and organizational patterns of problematic behaviors. Further, reporting demographic information will work to reveal any racial or other disparities, allowing for more targeted remedial action if necessary. The fact that this information will be provided on a statewide database, published on its website, and in an annual report ensures that the state and the public has access to necessary information.

S.B. 20-217 also mandates that local law enforcement agencies issue body-worn cameras to their officers and provides clear and consistent policies on their use, for public access to the recordings of alleged misconduct, and a rebuttable presumption that any missing footage assumes misconduct by the officer. These qualifications are especially important in reducing police violence, as studies have shown that simply outfitting officers with body-worn cameras is insufficient to significantly reduce police use of force.¹⁷ However, since the deployment of the cameras is coupled with strong policies and supervisory oversight, this policy has the potential to achieve maximum benefits in reducing use of force.¹⁸

Accountability for Police Misconduct:

As Attorney Benjamin Crump, who represents the family of George Floyd, explained today in front of the U.S. House Judiciary committee in his oral testimony: “If officers know they have immunity, they act with impunity.” Simply stated, reforms are unlikely to be effective if those who perpetuate misconduct

¹⁵ BRITTANY GARZA, COLO. FREEDOM INFO. COALITION, DISMANTLING THE “BLUE WALL” OF SECRECY: EXPERIENCE WITH PUBLIC ACCESS TO COMPLETED POLICE INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION FILES IN OTHER STATES 2 (2019), available at https://coloradofoic.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/DismantlingTheBlueWall_January2019.pdf (citing MARGARET B. KWOKA ET AL., ACCESS DENIED: COLORADO LAW ENFORCEMENT REFUSES PUBLIC ACCESS TO RECORDS OF POLICE MISCONDUCT (Univ. Denver Sturm Coll. of Law 2018)). Garza further notes that withholding internal affairs records is contrary to the overarching goal of the open records law to promote public transparency and accountability of government actors. *Id.*

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ See Robin S. Engel et al., *Moving Beyond “Best Practice”: Experiences in Police Reform and a Call for Evidence to Reduce Officer-Involved Shootings*, 687 ANNALS 146, 153 (2020), available at <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0002716219889328>.

¹⁸ *Id.*

are not held accountable. The current lack of accountability in policing¹⁹ has spurred Coloradans to demand more accountability in their communities.²⁰ The terms of S.B. 20-217 take an important step toward protecting the public and strengthening the integrity of police departments by demanding accountability for every officer.

Statistically speaking, a small number of officers in each department are responsible for a disproportionate share of uses of excessive force.²¹ By mandating termination for officers who are found criminally or civilly liable for serious misconduct (and for those who fail to complete required training), S.B. 20-217 helps to ensure that these officers who abuse their authority are held accountable to the system — and to the public whom they are sworn to protect.

According to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), not requiring decertification for officers with a history of serious misconduct “allows problem officers to be shuffled between police departments.”²² For example, one officer who pled guilty to negligent homicide was “given another chance” by another city and now **runs** their Police Department; another officer who was acquitted after shooting a fleeing man in the back kept his job and was “put in charge of training deputies in firearms and use of force.”²³ Not only does S.B. 20-217 hold officers accountable by mandating termination, it also requires the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST Board) to *permanently* revoke the officer’s certification, which would make the officer permanently ineligible for employment in law enforcement in Colorado.²⁴ Notably, a Washington Post investigation found that of the 1,881 U.S. police officers who were fired for misconduct between 2006 and 2017, 451 won their jobs back on appeal.²⁵ Further, the database the POST Board is required to create and maintain under this bill will ensure that officers prone to misconduct do not fly under the radar.

Finally, this bill would remove the defense of qualified immunity to permit civil claims by those whose constitutional rights have been violated. Brady understands well the dangerous and unjust implications of special protections from civil liability, that serves a few at the expense of many.²⁶ Civil liability is an important tool for both accountability and deterrence, and to provide justice for those injured in any

¹⁹ See, e.g., Zoe Samudzi, *Why Police Officers Aren’t Held Accountable When They Kill People*, TE Vogue (Jun. 17, 2017), available at

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/why-police-officers-arent-held-accountable-when-they-kill-people>.

²⁰ See Elise Schmelzer, *Aurora Leaders Make Moves to Replace “Toothless” Police Review Board with Stronger Civilian Oversight System*, Denver Post (Dec. 14, 2019), available at

<https://www.denverpost.com/2019/12/14/aurora-police-oversight/>; Faith Miller, *De’Von Bailey’s Death Spurs Group to Look at Police Accountability*, COLO. SPRINGS INDY (Feb. 4, 2020), available at <https://www.csindy.com/coloradosprings/devon-baileys-death-spurs-group-to-look-at-police-accountability/Content?oid=21209865>.

²¹ Samuel Walker, U.S. Dep’t Just., Off. Community Oriented Policing Services, *Early Intervention Systems For Law Enforcement Agencies: A Planning And Management Guide* (2003).

²² NAACP, *Pathways to Police Reform Community Mobilization Toolkit* 6 (2016).

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ COLO. GOV’T, *Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training: Basic Certification* (accessed June 10, 2020), available at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/post/basic-certification>.

²⁵ Kimbriell Kelly et al., *Fired/Rehired*, WASH. POST (Aug. 3, 2017), available at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/investigations/police-fired-rehired/>.

²⁶ BRADY, *Resources*, available at <https://www.bradyunited.org/resources>.

context. Law enforcement officers, and the departments that employ them, should not be absolutely shielded from civil responsibility.

Protecting those Exercising Free Speech

In the past two weeks, people across the globe have watched and marched with Americans in their collective outrage against the continual use of excessive force against civilians of color. Spurred by the tragic murder of George Floyd by an officer at the Minneapolis Police Department, protests in cities and localities across the U.S. have raged while law enforcement has, for the most part, responded with an increased show of militarization and force. In many cities, police officers have fired rubber bullets indiscriminately at protestors and journalists, and deployed pepper spray and tear gas at large crowds of peaceful protestors. These are dangerous tactics that have had traumatic,²⁷ and even lethal, results.²⁸

As Rohini Haar, a medical expert and senior advisor to the group Physicians for Human Rights explained: “I’ve never seen a case where the use of rubber bullets de-escalated a conflict or made for a safer environment...In most cases, it actually escalates violence.”²⁹ In fact, “rubber” bullets, which often have a metal core, not only exacerbate conflict - they often cause substantial injury and damage. One study identified 1,925 people injured by rubber bullets³⁰ and of those, 53 individuals died from their injuries and 294 suffered permanent disabilities; of the injuries, 70% were considered severe.³¹ As Dr. Douglas Lazzaro, a professor and expert in eye trauma at NYU Langone Health explained: “Shooting them into open crowds is reckless and dangerous.”³²

While chemical irritants like tear gas or pepper spray are often considered incapable of causing more than minimal irritation to the face and eyes, a review of literature found that they can cause injury and even death. Agent OC, commonly known as pepper spray, is essentially a highly concentrated form of hot pepper, available both as a spray and in gas form. Lower concentrations are available as self-defense “pepper spray;” however, the variant deployed by law enforcement is far more potent.³³ Pepper spray may include toxic chemicals, such as alcohol, halogenated hydrocarbons, and propellants. Even very low concentrations of OC can lead to ocular irritation, and the risk of affecting bystanders and individuals other than the intended targets is high due to change in wind speed and direction. Further, the diagnosis and treatment is complicated because of the combination of different chemicals and the lack of

²⁷ Anana Rochita, *Shot By Rubber Bullet During Protests, Sacramento Woman Faces Being Blind in One Eye*, ABC 10, June 8, 2020, available at <https://www.abc10.com/article/news/local/sacramento/sacramento-woman-rubber-bullet/103-ee5d334d-d25d-4cd3-bcf5-628d74a6f37d>.

²⁸ Megan Palin, *Student, 22, ‘Died After Being Tear-Gassed and Pepper-Sprayed at George Floyd Protest’ in Ohio*, THE SUN, June 8, 2020, available at <https://www.the-sun.com/news/951601/student-22-died-after-being-tear-gassed-at-floyd-protest>.

²⁹ Brian Freskos, *Police Should Never Use Rubber Bullets Against Civilians, Experts Say*, June 3, 2020, available at <https://www.thetrace.org/2020/06/police-rubber-bullets-george-floyd-protests>.

³⁰ INT’L NETWORK C.L. ORGS & PHYSICIANS FOR HUM. RIGHTS, *LETHAL IN DISGUISE: THE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF CROWD-CONTROL WEAPONS 7* (2018), available at <https://phr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/lethal-in-disguise.pdf> (hereinafter INCLO Report).

³¹ *Id.*

³² Liz Szabo, *What are Rubber Bullets? Weapons Used on George Floyd Protesters Can Maim and Kill*, NBC NEWS, June 3, 2020, available at <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/what-are-rubber-bullets-weapons-used-george-floyd-protesters-can-n1223581>.

³³ See INCLO Report, *supra* n. 30, at 40.

transparency about the agents used.³⁴ Similarly, “tear gas,” a variety of chemical compounds, has also been connected with serious injuries and in rare cases, even death: a systematic review of medical literature identified 5,131 people who suffered injuries from chemical irritants. Of these individuals, two died and 70 suffered permanent disabilities.³⁵ Out of 9,261 documented injuries, 8.7% were severe and required professional medical management, and 17% were substantial.³⁶

Other states and localities are taking immediate action to regulate the use of these dangerous tactics and tools.³⁷ Colorado must do the same by passing S.B. 20-217.

Conclusion

The calls for reform, accountability, and recognition of the racial inequities inherent in America’s policing system are ingrained in our history as a nation. The lives ended by police violence are too many to name, but the recent murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor have reignited the flame for justice on behalf of others, many of which did not garner the national spotlight. There is no easy solution, no simple panacea or one piece of legislation that will break the cycle of racist policing and violence overnight and restore the essential trust and accountability needed in communities across the country.

We recognize the need for comprehensive solutions and systemic change in order to meaningfully address these injustices. **Brady applauds this Committee for your consideration of this important step towards justice and we stand in strong support of S.B. 20-217** as a necessary means to get there. This bill will reform the mandate for use of force for all officers in Colorado, require officers to wear body cameras and to have an objective reason for stopping civilians in the course of their duties, ensure that the public has access to data on individual officers and departments, and protect those exercising their First Amendment right by prohibiting the use of dangerous rubber bullets and chemical gases by law enforcement at protests.

Police violence is gun violence, and this issue is critical to our country’s response to the crisis of firearms in our community today. Brady stands with Coloradans who have raised their voices and who count on their elected officials to take immediate and decisive action to **vote yes on S.B. 20-217** to ensure that all Coloradans will be protected equally under the law.

³⁴ *Id.* at 43.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.* at 7. It is also worth noting that eye injuries from the canister of tear gas can cause traumatic injuries to the head, neck, and torso; and eye injuries from the canister all led to permanent vision loss, most often from globe rupture. *Id.*

³⁷ See, e.g., Lisa Fernandez, *Berkeley Votes to Ban Tear Gas, San Francisco and Oakland Considering Too*, KTVU FOX 2, June 10, 2020, available at <https://www.ktvu.com/news/berkeley-votes-to-ban-tear-gas-san-francisco-and-oakland-considering-too>; Robert Salonga, *San Jose Police Adopt Restrictions on Rubber Bullets After Protest Backlash*, MERCURY NEWS, June 8, 2020, available at <https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/06/08/san-jose-police-adopt-restrictions-on-rubber-bullets-after-protest-backlash>; Katelyn Burns, *Cities and States Are Barring Police from Using Chokeholds and Tear Gas*, VOX, June 6, 2020, available at <https://www.vox.com/identities/2020/6/6/21282453/cities-reform-police-nationwide-protests-george-floyd>.

I am writing this testimony to address SB 20-217, Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Bill. I am a law enforcement spouse. I will admit when this bill was first introduced I was afraid for my spouse. He puts his life on the line for the citizens of Colorado every time he puts on his uniform. That in itself is scary enough and now with this bill he has to worry about the financial well being of his family as well. He was seriously considering leaving the profession because it just wasn't worth the risk for our family. I am very appreciative of the amendments that were passed in the Senate on the bill and it is closer to weeding out the "bad actors" while not punishing the well meaning law enforcement who are truly out there to protect and serve. The majority of law enforcement do their job honorably day in and day out for their entire career.

I would be supportive of amendments that will continue to protect the privacy of those who are filmed on body cameras. I would also like to see language removed from the bill that gives the presumption that if a body camera isn't on that there was nefarious activity the officer didn't want shown. Law enforcement is put in stressful situations on a daily basis where they have to act quickly, perhaps not being able to activate their camera. It should not be presumed that they have something to hide if it is not activated. I invite you to perhaps do a ride along with a police officer to see what they encounter on a shift so maybe you could have a better understanding.

Perhaps the part of all of this that concerns me the most is the demonization of law enforcement by the media and by leaders and legislators across the country. I have feared for the safety of my family during this time. We usually fly our Thin Blue Line flag when there is a fallen officer. We no longer feel it is safe to do so. The other day my neighbors contacted my husband to let him know that a person they did not recognize was walking through the neighborhood and slowly walked past our house staring at my husband's patrol car. As they passed the house they got on their phone and were quickly texting. They were afraid this person was going to do something to us. When my husband told me this I broke down in tears. I was so upset that this caused me to be afraid in my own home. I was afraid to let my children play outside. Why was my family being punished when my husband serves and protects the community? He is a good officer. Nobody wants to get rid of a bad cop like a good cop. As you continue to consider this bill, please continue to ensure the appreciation of good law enforcement while working to get rid of the bad. I hope that you continue to work with stakeholders to ensure this. If this bill is too far reaching I am afraid the state will lose a lot of the good law enforcement officers and this would be a detriment to the citizens of Colorado.

Hello, my name is Jacob Stock and I'm currently a student at University of Colorado at Boulder. I am in firm affirmation of this bill for three major reasons. First, I believe that recent events have proved that our current legislation surrounding law enforcement is not comprehensive enough. This is shown by the clear First Amendment infringement demonstrated by the use of tear gas and foam bullets against peaceful protesters and reporters in Denver most notably on May 29th and 30th. Secondly, my personal experiences in these protests have made clear to me the excessive force currently being used by police and the effect on civilians' health, both mental and physical. Lastly, the clear systemic racism and targeting of people of color by law enforcement have exhibited the need for additional accountability measures for law enforcement.

First, the First Amendment in the United States of America's constitution clearly states that "Congress shall make no law...prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble." Our current system of law enforcement holds officers unaccountable on their infringement of this amendment. Reporters have been shot at with foam bullets and gassed alongside peaceful protesters with law enforcement's justification often being that an empty water bottle was thrown at them or that someone in the crowd was being violent (of which there are numerous accounts where agitators' identities are found to be those working in law enforcement). The people of the Black Lives Matter movement are owed their constitutional right to assemble without fear of retribution from local law enforcement, especially with such excessive force. The physical and legal offense against reporters covering the protests is also a clear infringement of the First Amendment, only further clarifying for us the excessive force used in that local law enforcement does not want the violence against protesters to be publicized.

Secondly, my own personal experience has dictated to me that the action's of local law enforcement during the protests have been detrimental to the physical and mental health of civilians. Walking in the protests for the first time on the 31st, I was shocked and honestly terrified when protesters felt the need to begin chanting "Hands up! Don't shoot!" as we walked by a brigade of police officers. I immediately reached for my safety goggles and saline solution, ready to aid any protesters who were hurt, I then realized that the protesters remained peaceful. However, the fact that these protesters, now including myself, have become desensitized to the threat of law enforcement and have become conditioned to perform the equivalent of raising a white flag anytime they walk past law enforcement. This coupled with the severe injuries these foam bullets caused in people all across the nation as well as in Denver are very telling as to the threat that this seemingly unregulated law enforcement poses to protesters and everyday citizens.

Finally, the clear systemic racism and targeting of people of color by local law enforcement with their current regulations are detrimental to the survival and propagation of these communities and thus law enforcement must be held accountable for these violations of so many people's civil liberties. We have tried to keep the same power in law enforcement and combat this bias with racial bias training and other methods aimed at eliminating racism within law enforcement. However, these trainings have not stopped this phenomenon and thus law

enforcement's power must be reduced and they must be held accountable for their crimes. The fact that George Floyd's murderer had been previously written up for racial bias an excessive use of force but was still on their local law enforcement is telling that the police are not being held accountable and it is leading to further loss of the lives of people of color.

In conclusion, I am in firm affirmation of this bill for three major reasons. First, the current force being used to harm protesters and reporters is a clear infringement of the First Amendment and thus, officers must be held accountable. Second, the current psychological, physiological, and chemical warfare being used in protests is extremely detrimental to the wellbeing of citizens. Lastly, this institution has been long known for racial bias and their targeting of people of color, and thus in order to protect these communities, local law enforcement must be held accountable.

My name is Kiki Council and I am a Colorado attorney. I am also Black. I grew up in Aurora, Colorado, graduated from Smoky Hill High School, and then left Colorado to attend the University of Chicago. After graduating with honors, I took a year off to work with refugees and asylum seekers and to work at a small law firm that represented unions. Then, I returned home to attend the University of Colorado Law School. Upon graduation, again with honors and in the top 25% of my class, I clerked on the State Supreme Court under then-Justice Eid. I followed Judge Eid to the United States Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit in November 2017, after she was appointed to replace Judge Neil Gorsuch. I currently work at the largest private law firm in Colorado, Holland & Hart.

I give all this background for two reasons: first, to make the point that despite my accomplishments, I am still often reduced to my gender and my race. The threat of bad policing is very real to me. My first bad encounter with the police occurred when I was only 16 years old. I was pulled over for no reason and then harassed and bullied by an Aurora police officer for several minutes. Because I had done nothing wrong, he eventually left me alone, but not without threatening me. I didn't tell my mom or anyone else because it was such a terrifying event. It did not matter to that officer that I was on the honor roll, and an International Baccalaureate student, that I spoke "well," or that I tested in the 90th percentile for the PSAT. What mattered was the neighborhood I was in, and the color of my skin. This is the first of many unnecessary and terrifying encounters I have had with the police. If this bill does not pass, given the neighborhood I live in, off of West Alameda here in Denver, it is a reality that I could be the next Breonna Taylor.

The second reason I give all this background, is because I have seen firsthand, as a judicial law clerk, the way in which qualified immunity is used to insulate bad behavior. As I clerked, especially on the 10th Circuit, I became familiar with the qualified immunity analysis. I learned that unless the plaintiff's allegations stated a claim of violation of a clearly established law, the defendant pleading qualified immunity would be entitled to dismissal before the commencement of discovery.

What struck and horrified me as my clerkship went on, was just how difficult it was for a citizen, or a class of citizens, to demonstrate "clearly established law." Reason and logic told me that this shouldn't be too hard, but I was wrong. I came to learn that some divisions of the 10th Circuit have found that, if there was no legal precedent, with a similarly situated suspect, use of force by the officer, and location, then there is no clearly established law. I came to realize, too, that this is the logical conclusion of the qualified immunity analysis.

I also quickly found that there is no clearly established law. I would read briefs detailing horrific acts by police and prison guards in Colorado, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and spend hours trying to find a single case where a similar bad act had been condemned by the Court. I could never find any. I wish I had the time this week to research exactly how many times the 10th Circuit has found a defendant was not entitled to the qualified immunity defense. My gut tells me it's extremely rare.

What I also saw, at oral argument, were the families of these victims. Those whose loved one had been maimed or killed by the state. They sat in the courtroom, several years after their loved

one had been seriously injured or killed, and they waited anxiously, trying to understand what was happening. What we (and by we, I mean lawyers and judges) often forget, I think, is that these are real people. These aren't just legal analyses. These are human beings who have gone through immense suffering, suffering that many of us can only imagine. This suffering was at the hands of the state, which has utterly failed them. And these real human beings wait years and years just to see if their case can even go to discovery. They sit in at trial, they sit in at the appellate courts, and they sit in at the supreme courts, if the case gets there. And year after year they are disappointed and let down by the judicial system. The same system that likely already failed their loved ones before.

The only logical conclusion for the qualified immunity analysis as it exists is a legal holding that if there is no clearly established case law condemning the malicious acts of the police officer, the defense applies. We cannot conscionably allow our jurisprudence to continue developing this way and to act as an absolute shield against all killings and serious injuries that the state inflicts upon its citizens. Nor can we hope that one day, maybe, some rogue judicial activist judge or panels of judges will fix the problem for us. Knowing the current composition of the 10th Circuit, that will not happen in this generation.

Moreover, the people have spoken. I have marched for nearly two weeks with the citizens of Colorado. The people want this bill to pass so that police officers may start to be held accountable for horrifying acts they perpetrate against the very citizens they should be protecting.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your service to our beautiful state.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in reference to SB20-217. I am the wife of a Colorado police officer. I ask that you consider the character that is required to perform the job of a law enforcement officer when addressing this bill. These men and women in uniform face unimaginable threats, heartaches, and fear every single day. They are willing to witness the worst possible scenes and place themselves in harm's way to protect their community.

My husband was 10 years old when he decided he wanted to become a police officer. He spent his whole life working towards that goal. He educated himself, he trained his body, he learned how to care for people he doesn't even know. Today, he is unsure if he can continue to live his dream. He is heartbroken that the very people he has sworn to protect have turned on him. This bill feels slap in the face. It feels to law enforcement officers and their families like retaliation for a horrible incident that they had nothing to do with.

I believe this metaphor accurately describes the character of law enforcement officers in America. "The sheep do not want the dog around. He looks too much like the wolf. He reminds them that danger lurks out there, just beyond the relative safety of the fence. The wolf also hates the dog. He knows that it is the dog that stands between him and his prey. It is because of the dog that he is lean. The dog is the reason the wolf is forced to stalk the darkness. The dog knows these facts. Undeterred, he stands watch, ever ready to do battle. **Despite that he is an unwelcome guest in their midst, the dog is ready, at a moment's notice, to give his life in defense of his flock. It is simply who he is.**"

Although we were encouraged by the amendments made in the senate and grateful for our voices being heard, I urge you to continue the work that they did. I urge you to remember that these officers are human beings just like you. They don't deserve to feel demonized and degraded while they continue to risk their lives to keep their communities safe.

Thank you.

June 3rd, 2020
House Judiciary Committee
SB 20-217 Enhance Law Enforcement and Integrity

Good afternoon Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melanie Kesner and I'm the Public Policy Director of the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado. We bring people together across diverse religions and backgrounds to work towards equal rights, inclusion, and opportunity for all Coloradans.

It is safe to say that Coloradans are angry and upset at the recent horrific events surrounding the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others. I know you've seen the protests in the streets. I know you've heard the cries for justice. It's happening in your communities and districts and it's happening all over the country. Few of us have the power to do something about it. **But you are one of those people.** You need not look far for confirmation of this problem. When your black and brown colleagues in the legislature tell you they feel unsafe when interacting with the very people who are meant to keep them safe, we **MUST** listen."

This bill is critical to bringing some justice to victims of racialized police brutality. By allowing Coloradans to seek redress against peace officers for constitutional violations in state courts, the bill avoids the highly suspect federal doctrine of **qualified immunity**, which has historically served in the federal courts to protect law enforcement officers who perpetuate discriminatory policing and violence against communities of people of color.

Nationally, Black people are three times more likely to be killed by police than white people. Black people were 24% of those killed by police despite being 13% of the population, and there is no accountability. 99% of killings by police from 2013-2019 have not resulted in officers being charged with a crime, and this is just a small sample of the data.

We have overwhelming evidence of discriminatory policing, that police are unable or unwilling to police themselves, that there is no justice to be had in the criminal courts against bad cops, and that one of the few ways to seek justice while raising the profile of police brutality and discriminatory policing is through civil rights actions.

We need policies that reflect compassion and transparency and that hold our law enforcement officers to a higher standard. Our communities have put their trust in these officers to "protect and serve." The best versions of our criminal justice system and law enforcement branch are ones that work towards transparency and rehabilitation. This bill would move the needle in both areas.

We are well aware that the state is in a very difficult situation financially and adding another expense to the budget is never an easy decision. However, the upfront cost of implementing this policy will save money by reducing expenses in jails and by investing longterm in supporting community health and wellbeing. Amidst a budget crisis where you are all asked to make impossible decisions, I urge you to prioritize accountability and community health.

The diverse faith communities that the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado represents all believe in a vision of the future where no person of color has to fear the police and where arrest and use of

force by law enforcement are last resorts, not first options. My faith, Judaism, specifically states in the Mishna (commentary on the Old Testament) “If one destroys a single soul, it is as if that person destroyed the entire world; if one saves a single soul, it is as if one saved the entire world.” Both George Floyd’s world and his family’s world were destroyed that day, and currently, qualified immunity prevents community members from holding police responsible when they violate laws, policies, and community trust.

On behalf of the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado, our 10,000 members across the state, and every person protesting outside the Capitol right now, I urge you to save their worlds and vote yes for SB 20- 217.



NAACP

Colorado / Montana / Wyoming
State Area Conference

Dear Elected Members of the Colorado House of Representatives Finance Committee,

We are writing today -- those who work in our communities as “freedom fighters” and as elected/appointed leaders in the NAACP Colorado State Conference -- to strongly endorse SB20-217, Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity. We ask for your affirmative votes to move it through Committee and ultimately to the desk of Governor Jared Polis for signature.

There is no more important work that you can do in this moment.

As you know, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the NAACP, is the country’s oldest and largest historic civil rights organization. The NAACP has more than a half million members nationwide and we are proud of the advocacy work of our members from Pueblo County to Weld County and everywhere across Colorado. Carrying out our “game-changer” work in Criminal Justice Reform has been a focus of our work over the last several years. But it has been frustrating work; work that has been hamstrung in Colorado because we, as a state, have lacked a cohesive public policy guide despite this being our state’s most serious public safety issue.

We intone these names: Paul Childs, Alonzo Ashley, Rev. Marvin Booker, Jessica Hernandez, Michael Marshall, Jessie Garcia, Deramus Lemuel, De’Von Bailey, Desmond Hayes, Elijah McClain, Alexis Mendez-Perez, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and too many more killed at the hands of police. Though not all of their killings happened in Colorado, this is the state that leads on important issues.

We are calling on you in this moment to lead as we do -- in respect to those taken from us, in respect to their families, and in care and regard for all of us, please pass SB20-217.

Law enforcement should be as much science as art. Though officers should feel free to love on their communities and protect them in ways that are unique to their service, there must be a guide; a playbook to prevent wrongful acts and unjust deeds. We already know the history and we must do something about it NOW.

SB20-217 can be that playbook. We support the establishment of statewide protocols for policing. We support ending qualified immunity. Every person -- every member of law enforcement -- must be held responsible for their actions and must be clear on the actions they



NAACP

Colorado / Montana / Wyoming
State Area Conference

take (and do not take). They must be clear on what it truly means to protect and serve. Too many lives have been taken.

We urge you to vote yes in committee and to send this along to the full House and to the Governor for signature. We applaud you for your progressive service to Colorado, to the country and indeed to the world.

Thank you,

NAACP CO MT WY State Conference, Rosemary Lytle, President

NAACP State Conference Civic Engagement & Voting Rights Committee, Cherry-Rose Anderson, Chair

NAACP State Conference Criminal Justice Committee, State Secretary Shikima Ray, Chair

NAACP State Conference Youth & College Division, Charizma Johnson, Representative

NAACP Pueblo Branch, Roxana Mack, President

NAACP Colorado Springs Branch, Pastor Jesse Brown, Jr., President

NAACP Colorado Springs Youth Council, Jahaun Thompson, Representative

NAACP Douglas County Organizing Committee, Danielle Young-Kombo, Representative

NAACP Aurora Branch, C. Omar Montgomery, President

NAACP Denver Branch, Sondra A. Young, President

NAACP Boulder County Branch, Annett James, President

NAACP Weld County Organizing Committee, April Tonsberg-Applegren, Representative



NAACP

Colorado / Montana / Wyoming
State Area Conference



THE DENVER FOUNDATION

June 9, 2020

Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

Subject: Support for SB20-217

To the Colorado General Assembly:

On behalf of The Denver Foundation, I am writing today to express support for SB20-217 Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity, a bill that will increase transparency, accountability, and public oversight of law enforcement agencies. This bill is a first step toward meaningful reform of Colorado's approach to public safety and law enforcement.

The Denver Foundation is adding its voice to the public outcry that has brought hundreds of thousands of people to the streets to protest the killing of George Floyd, and the systemic racism deep-rooted in criminal justice systems across the United States, including Colorado. New voices are speaking out, and more people need to be heard. We are at a historic inflection point in civil opposition to government-sanctioned violence against Black men in America. We must seize this moment to enact law enforcement reform such as SB20-217.

A just system of law and order must be rooted in transparency, accountability, and public oversight. We hear and understand concerns about privacy and potential unintended consequences of eliminating the doctrine of qualified immunity in the criminal justice system. Yet it is time to focus on the known consequences of our current system: Black men experience inequitable and disproportionate profiling, policing, enforcement, and incarceration. Tragically, the entire world can clearly see the routine brutality and lethal violence inflicted upon Black men. We must finally respond to the call to dismantle racism within law enforcement.

Beyond this bill, The Denver Foundation firmly advocates for a transformational reimagining of how a just society invests in public safety. Rather than prioritizing policing and incarceration, we must reinvest in community services led by those most impacted by harmful practices, both historic and current. We must work together toward the restoration and resilience of communities of color.

The Denver Foundation believes that SB20-217 is a significant first step to reforming law enforcement integrity in Colorado and supports swift passage.

Sincerely,

Javier Alberto Soto
President and CEO
The Denver Foundation



Written Testimony in Support of SB20-217: Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Act (ELEIA)

Elephant Circle is a nonprofit organization dedicated to birth justice, which means creating a world where every pregnant person has a circle of support throughout the perinatal period and is equally capable of self-determination during that time. Elephant Circle stands in strong support of SB20-217 because self-determination will not be realized until all families, including families of color, are free from state-sanctioned violence. Elephant Circle has been working on issues like this since 2010 when we were instrumental in passing Colorado's law against the shackling of incarcerated people during pregnancy and birth.

The through line of both the birth justice and Black Lives Matter movements is the recognition that subjugation of Black families by racist institutions must stop, whether those institutions be the medical system or the criminal justice system. In particular, police brutality reinforces white supremacy and as long as white supremacy is sanctioned by the state through police brutality, justice will not be possible.

Police violence disproportionately impacts communities of color. Structural disparities in criminal justice, child welfare, and health care systems collectively rob families of color of the safety and security necessary for both health and justice. Furthermore, the fundamental right to parent children includes the right to raise children free from institutional violence and the erosion of public health. The environmental stress inherent to living in fear of police violence, or as the subject of police violence negatively impacts perinatal health and birth outcomes.¹ Institutionalized inequities in the criminal justice system increase the state presence and police involvement in the lives of poor families, which profoundly impacts these families' ability to freely make reproductive choices.

SB20-217 condemns police brutality and holds officers accountable for violence. In particular, Elephant Circle applauds the ELEIA's provisions removing qualified immunity from police officers so that they may be sued in civil action for excessive use of force. Holding officers individually liable for exercises of excessive force sends an important message that police violence will not be tolerated in Colorado, and importantly signals that victims of police brutality have a clear right to be free from such abuse. Police accountability is a birth justice issue. Elephant Circle also strongly supports the ELEIA's absolute ban on chokeholds, and the further constraints placed on the use of physical force in making an arrest or preventing an escape.

SB20-217 declares Colorado's commitment to the human rights of its citizenry to be free from police violence. Elephant Circle applauds this bill as an essential step in achieving the twin goals of birth justice and racial equality.

¹ See, e.g., Armeta Rogers, *How Police Brutality Harms Mothers: Linking Police Violence to the Reproductive Justice Movement*, 12 *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* 205 (2015); Michelle S. Jacobs, *The Violent State: Black Women's Invisible Struggle Against Police Violence*, 24 *William & Mary Journal of Race, Gender, and Social Justice* 39 (2017); Julia Craven, *For Black Women, Police Violence and Reproductive Justice Often Intersect*, *HuffingtonPost.com*, June 27, 2017 (<https://tinyurl.com/ycp2tl8v>).

Senators and Representatives,
June 10, 2020

I want to thank everyone for all of your work and for taking the time to read my written testimony. I feel a bit better by the amendments that were passed by Senate on the bill but, I do want to ask to please remove the language that implies there is a presumption that if a body camera isn't on that there was nefarious activity the officer didn't want to show. We all know technology always has issues.

Now I want to talk to you as a wife of a LEO, as a mother and 3. employee of an Advocacy Center for Children.

1. As a wife of an LE I was and still am terrified of ramifications for my spouse, myself, and our children, if he would be to make any mistake during his working hours. We are all human and make mistakes all the time. Finding ourselves in the position of losing our home that we both have worked very hard for. The thought of how a simple mistake can affect our lifetime savings. This could affect our children and prevent them seeking a college career without the financial support of their parents.

My husband is a wonderful human being, he did not join to force to be better than anyone nor to use the power in evil. No, he joined because he has a heart of servant. He loves the community he serves and enjoys running tours those bullets or any kind of danger when everyone else is running away and, he does it to keep his community safe and out of harm. Not all officers are bad, we can't punish all for the actions of a few. Most of these officers do their job honorably day in and day out their entire career. But people out there don't care, he has been spit on, pushed, yelled at, and many other thing in the last few weeks because of the George Floyd case and because of legislation. Specially for being a Black Officer.

2. My children love their father, in their eyes he is a hero, "dad is an officer, he is a hero, he helps out in the time of need and during the most dangerous time of some one's life, he does it with his heart on his sleeve and if he needs to take off his shirt to give it you, he will" were the words written by my fifth grader on his first day of this last school year. Now that same 5th grader is NOT allowed to mention that his father is a "hero" that his father is a police officer, that his father likes helping others. That fifth grader is now only to pray harder for his hero in silence when he walks out the door to protect and serve others in our community. That 5th grader is not allowed to wear any clothing items that represent our law enforcement. My 5th grader and I proudly wore out LE gear all the time, he distributed batch stickers to his friends and now he cannot do that. Just this last weekend one of his friend from our neighbor came to our door and return one of those badge stickers stating that his dad did not want that sticker because my son's father was not only a Police Officer but he was also a trader to his race because he is black. I was left with no words for my son. I am terrified how officers of LE have been demonized so much in the media and by leaders and legislators across the country. No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop and us the wives!

3. For the past decade I have been working with victims of sex assaults', physical abuse, domestic violence, and homicide. I want to ask that we continue supporting all victims of major crimes and continue to protect their privacy when reporting a crime and being recorded by BWC. I can't imagine being a victim and knowing that it is very possible that my recorded video of the worst times of my life could be the sensation of social media and the 10pm Fox News. This makes me sick to my stomach. Our community already suffers from not reporting many crimes

to LE for many other reasons, knowing that their recording is available, unedited will take a larger impact and will start to see an even higher number of those non reported crimes. We as a community need to do better. We as a community need to stand behind our victims and do not allow the multiple victimization by allowing their videos to be out and available for review when requested by individuals.

Again, thank you for all of your work.

Dulce Solis

Dulcersolis10@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

When the SB20-217 was initially proposed, my family and I were terrified of losing our house, life savings, and what little assets we have due to the ramifications of my husband making a mistake as a police officer.

Since the amendments have been passed in the Senate, my family and I have experienced a sense of relief and gratitude due to the changes which were made concerning the amendments. I feel more confident about this bill because the senate has listened to our concerns.

My family and I will be supportive of amendments that continue to protect the privacy of individuals who would be filmed on body camera. However, I ask that you remove the language which implies there is a presumption that if a body camera is not on that there is nefarious activity the officer did not want shown.

I am afraid police officers have been demonized across the country due to a small percentage of bad actors, in which I have received harassing messages from friends claiming “no one will shed a tear when your husband is killed” and “all cops should be killed and abolished”. I now live in constant fear and am afraid to reveal my husband’s career.

Please do not forget there are honorable men and women who continue to serve and protect their communities day in and day out for their entire career.

Let me be absolutely clear, no one hates a bad cop more than a good cop.

Let us work together to provide justice, protection, and unity among communities in Colorado.

Thank you for your time,

A proud wife of a Law Enforcement Officer.



Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today, representing the position of The Arc of Colorado. The Arc of Colorado promotes and protects the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes. Thank you for the opportunity and accommodation to provide you with written testimony in support of SB-217.

For many individuals with I/DD, excessive force is a reality of access to the community. Since the Chapters of The Arc's inception in the 1950's, our 14 chapters have dealt with many instances of the use of excessive force by law enforcement. Some of these interactions have even resulted in death. The history of restraint is a dark one and individuals with I/DD often suffer early trauma related to being held down or otherwise incapacitated by authority figures. These interactions continue and are worsened as some with I/DD age and access their communities more fully. Behavior indicative of their diagnosis may be considered odd by the general public, who then call the police. For individuals with certain diagnosis, like autism, who are also black and brown, these interactions can result in increased harm and violence.

In one such instance at one of our local chapters, a woman in the community called with police to report a man with autism who was standing in front of a coin machine. When law enforcement arrived, they judged his behavior odd and unresponsive. They eventually restrained him using a chokehold, though he had no weapons and was not combative. He was seriously injured and as a result, can no longer access the community without 24/7 line-of-sight supervision to keep him safe.

This is not an unfamiliar story. According to the National Center on Criminal Justice and Disabilities, almost half of all people killed by the police are people with disabilities. Those with I/DD are 44% more likely to be arrested before the age of 28 than their neurotypical peers. Though NCCJD does not currently collect statistics related to race and disability, other testimony that you will hear and read today should help to paint a picture of the increased risk for people at the intersection of race and disability.

We believe that this bill provides a way to increase accountability, transparency and integrity from law enforcement. Training is not enough. Despite widespread training, those we serve still have poor interactions with law enforcement. The provisions in this bill are central to real change. The disability rights movement is founded on the tenets of community access and independence. All people should have the right to live, work, play, and learn in the communities of their choosing, safely. We urge you to vote yes.

Once again, thank you for your time, and for the opportunity to voice support of SB-217. I am happy to answer any question that you might have through email or by phone.

Sincerely,



Abigail Negley, Public Policy Manager, The Arc of Colorado

abigail@thearcofco.org

(303)864-9334

I am a law enforcement officer wife and I feel compelled to ask that you see the multitude of good men and women who serve as peace officers and keep our communities safe. These men and women serve with an unparalleled level of integrity and honor. They are called to be protectors, heroes and servants. I am afraid that law enforcement has been demonized so much in the media and by leaders and legislators across the country. The truth must be known that no one hates a bad cop more than a good cop (or their spouse). My family has been fearful for our own safety as we know some officer's homes that have been scoped, and others who have been threatened. As I do feel better about the amendments that were passed in the Senate on the bill, I ask that additional amendments be made that continue to protect the privacy of those who would be filmed on body camera. I also ask that you remove any language that can imply that there is a presumption that, if a body camera isn't on, that there was nefarious activity that the officer didn't want shown. I'm truly afraid that, if this bill passes exactly as it is stated, that we may lose good men and women who wear the badge, leaving our law enforcement agencies understaffed and in unsafe situations. If we are unable to keep good men and women behind the badge, this defeats the purpose of this bill, and crime will be higher than ever. We, as law enforcement families of GOOD law enforcement officers, are concerned for the safety of our loved ones who wear the badge if they are continually painted in a negative light as if they are the bad guys. I am concerned of the ramifications for my law enforcement officer if he were to make a mistake at work. I'm concerned for my law enforcement officer's safety as I feel this bill is taking away much of his ability to protect himself and the public. This is an invitation for those who wish to commit crimes to do so because there is less that law enforcement will be able to do to prevent crimes from being committed for fear of ramifications if he or she is seen as using any kind of physical force. I believe that our law enforcement officers should be held to a high level of accountability, but that begins on the front end with a higher level of education, training, and continued education to ensure that our officers maintain the level of integrity and honor that is required. Additionally, can we add a level of accountability to the media and the general public? If body camera footage is to be released to the public within 21 days, can we require that full footage, along with documentation and reports, is shown by the media, and not just portions that do not portray the full story behind the footage?

Thank you for your time!

John Seward

2661 Valentia Street
Denver, CO 80238
(720) 682-4501

June 10, 2020

Honorable Members
Committee on Finance
Colorado House of Representatives
200 E Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity, SB20-217

Dear Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I write to you today in support of Senate Bill 217 concerning measures to enhance law enforcement integrity. I research social science at the University of Denver and while this letter expresses only my views, I am sure the entire DU community would support this measure.

The past few days our state has seen major demonstrations about the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.¹ Mr. Floyd's death is just the latest example of the need for major law enforcement reforms across the nation. The foundation of our democracy is the belief of equal justice under the law. Equal justice seems in theory to be a simple concept but in practice history has taught us that equal justice is far from simple.

In the United States we provide our law enforcement officers with a great deal of power, rightfully so, they after all put themselves in harm's way every single day in service to our communities. I have been known to quote many great scholars, but here I want to quote a work of fiction. In Spider Man we read "with great power comes great responsibility."² That could not be more true for our law enforcement officers, we place a great deal of power in them and in return trust they will use it responsibly.

I'm a researcher so I love data, why? Because data does not lie. Data provides us an objective understanding and we can use it to improve our systems and hold each other accountable. This bill if passed will provide the state crucial data on the frequency of use of force and provide our policy makers the information they need to continue on the path of reform.

¹ Caitlin Hendee and Wilson Beese, "Dumpster Fires, Vandalism in Denver during 3rd Night of Protests," *9NEWS*, May 31, 2020, Online edition, sec. Local, <https://www.9news.com/article/news/local/local-politics/denver-george-floyd-protests-day-3/73-b685ddd4-f08a-4e6e-9fe9-e7d68e2c1d78>.

² Stan Lee, "Spider Man, Amazing Fantasy #15," August 1962, Marvel Comics, https://www.marvel.com/comics/issue/16926/amazing_fantasy_1962_15.

Leading scholars around the world have concluded that the chokehold is an ineffective use of force method.³ Its potential benefits are strongly outweighed by its potential for harm. There are other safer more effective ways to constrain an individual.⁴ This bill ends the use of the choke hold by law enforcement in Colorado, a move that is supported by decades of research. But beyond what the research indicates, prohibiting use of the chokehold has the effect of restoring trust in law enforcement as does any act that rolls back use of force.⁵ All around the world the chokehold is being reevaluated as an effective use of force method, we are ahead of the game⁶

Right now, trust in law enforcement is at an all-time low⁷ How do we fix this? By improving accountability. This bill makes it very clear that the POST Board must revoke the certification of any officer that is convicted of inappropriate use of physical force. The bill requires the POST Board maintain a database of information relating to an officer's untruthfulness, decertification and termination for cause; making it so an officer can't get fired from one agency and get hired in another. It requires peace officer to have an objective justification for making a stop and report it, this way we have data about how many stops are being made. All of these reforms have the effect of improving trust in law enforcement something that is needed more now more than ever.⁸ Accountability is so important in restoring trust.

The most impactful aspect of this bill is the sweeping changes it makes to peace officer liability. Giving people the ability to sue when they feel their rights have been violated gives our courts the oversight authority of law enforcement that they were previously lacking. By removing qualified immunity and good faith but erroneous belief in the lawfulness as a defense in a civil case will ensure that those officers who might not be criminally liable can still be held to account for their misplaced actions. Trust in law enforcement will improve when the community is able to see accountability in action.

I have long been confused by Colorado's fleeing felon law. By definition if someone is running away from you, they do not pose a threat to you. Force must only be used when an immediate life threat exists. Our goal must be to reduce the frequency of use of force incidents. The bill takes the first step in making this so. I can't stress enough deadly force must be the last resort.

³ Michael R. Smith & Mathew Petrocelli "The Effectiveness of Force Used by Police in Making Arrests," 2002, Police Practice and Research, An International Journal, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15614260220150591>.

⁴ Smith & Petrocelli

⁵ Walter Katz, "Enhancing Accountability and Trust with Independent Investigations of Police Lethal Force," Harvard Law Review Forum, <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/forharoc128&i=235>.

⁶ John Leicester, "'Dangerous:' Around the World, Police Chokeholds Are Being Scrutinized," June 3, 2020, TIME Magazine, <https://time.com/5847134/police-chokeholds/>.

⁷ Paul Joseph Figueroa "Building Community Trust: Key Strategies as Perceived by Law Enforcement Leaders," 2012, University of La Verne, Order No. 3535773, <https://du.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1286744297?accountid=14608>.

⁸ German Lopez, "How to reform American police, according to experts," Jun 1, 2020, Vox, <https://www.vox.com/2020/6/1/21277013/police-reform-policies-systemic-racism-george-floyd>.

RE: Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity

June 4, 2020

Page 3 of 3

Law enforcement has an important job to do, but they are not above the law. We rely on them to keep us safe, but we also rely on them to be responsible for their use of force. Peace officers have the power to end a life in just a few quick seconds. We ask them to risk their lives every day and in return we provide them comprehensive training, it is essential they attend, this bill makes sure they do. Too often police officers think of themselves as warriors, we must change this mentality to one of guardians, there to serve the community.

Too often we hear stories of people who lose their lives at the hands of the police.⁹ While sometimes this is a necessary action, we must work together to reduce its frequency. Police reform as a major issue, one that should involve many conversations, with many people from all walks of life. This bill is a great first step, it cannot be the only step, but it starts the conversation.

We spend a lot of time talking about police officers that mess up. I don't want to forget the majority of this states peace officers who go to work every day to do a job that not many people want to do. They step up to serve their communities, they are there in times of need and they are there when we need them most. We must not overlook the major function they play in our society. Peace officers are true public servants and their work should never go unnoticed.

I return again to the quote from Spider Man "with great power comes great responsibility."¹⁰ We trust our peace officers to use their power for good and be responsible for their actions. A few bad apples can poison an entire tree. That is why it is vital that we reduce use of force, collect the critical data and hold every officer accountable.

I want to conclude by thanking every member of this committee for their leadership and service to our state. Thank you for considering this bill and for doing the important work of the people of this great state.

I urge a YES vote on Senate Bill 217.

Thank you for your time.

Grateful,



John Seward

⁹ Megan Webber, "Denver police identify man killed in Friday night officer-involved shooting" May 4, 2020, The Denver Post, <https://www.denverpost.com/2020/05/04/denver-police-officer-involved-shooting-broncos-stadium-william-debose/>.

¹⁰ Stan Lee, "Spider Man, Amazing Fantasy #15," August 1962, Marvel Comics, https://www.marvel.com/comics/issue/16926/amazing_fantasy_1962_15.



Denver FIRST

*The Denver Forensic Institute for
Research, Service, & Training*

June 10, 2020

Dear House Finance Committee,

My name is Dr. Apryl Alexander and I am a professor in psychology, member of Black Lives Matter 5280, and a board member for the Colorado Juvenile Defender Center (CJDC). I am writing to offer my personal support for SB20-217 Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity. I am unable to be in the committee in person today; but the bill is important enough that I am providing written testimony and have asked that it be read during the hearing.

According to a 2019 University of Michigan study, police violence is the sixth leading cause of death for Black men in the United States. This means about one in every 1,000 Black men can expect to be killed by police. The researchers stated, "This study shows us that police killings are deeply systematic, with race, gender and age patterning this excess cause of death." Individuals can take preventative measures for things like cardiovascular disease and diabetes, such as healthy eating and exercise, but what can we do about police violence?

Moreover, Black women are also significantly more likely to be killed by police compared to white women. As it is Pride Month—We must recognize the death of Tony McDade and the fact that nearly 60% of transgender individuals have reported mistreatment by police, including verbal harassment, physical assault, and sexual assault. Police violence also has spillover effects. Research has revealed that Black people who are repeatedly exposed to videos of police violence exhibit long-term physical and psychological health consequences. This last week has highlighted that the issue of police violence is a public health concern and needs to be addressed.

People have been marching in Colorado and around the country this last week as a call for police accountability. This bill would help to meet the demands of protestors by enhancing civil rights protections, eliminating qualified immunity, and requiring body-worn cameras. Research reveals that the use of body-worn cameras helps to reduce use of excessive force or deadly force and also increases verification of misuse of conduct complaints. Research also reveals that body-worn cameras also results in higher rates of citizen compliance to officer commands during encounters and fewer complaints against law enforcement. Lastly, the qualified immunity doctrine is broken and prohibits victims, their families, and their communities from getting justice they need and deserve.

SB20-217 aims to uphold Coloradan's rights and protections under the Colorado constitution, increase accountability for state-sanctioned violence, and reduce the expression of structural racism. This week protestors throughout the state have voiced their concerns about this public health issue and wanting to see change. Therefore, I am in support of SB20-217.

Kind Regards,



Apryl Alexander, PsyD
Associate Professor | [Graduate School of Professional Psychology \(GSPP\)](#)
Director | [Denver Forensic Institute for Research, Service, and Training \(Denver FIRST\)](#) Outpatient
Competency Restoration Program
University of Denver
2450 South Vine Street
Denver, CO 80208-4101
Office: 303.871.6323
Email: apryl.alexander@du.edu



I am unable to get the link to work to submit a written testimony. I would like to submit a written testimony for SB 20-217 that is being heard by the house finance committee today at 1pm. Please see my testimony below.

I want to take some time to voice my concerns regarding SB 20-217. I am very thankful for the amendments the Senate has made to address our concerns about this bill. However I feel there are things that need to still change.

I am very concerned about the way law enforcement has been portrayed in the news and feel to lump all officers into one group is simply not fair. It is like saying a specific demographic of people are criminals because of the color of their skin. It is a ridiculous and absurd claim to make.

>

> My husband is a good officer. He has worked for his department for 11 years and through those years he has worked very hard to protect his community. He has 2 life saving awards, one a man was having a heart attack and my husband began CPR immediately upon arriving on scene. The emergency room doctor said the man wouldn't have survived without my husbands efforts. The other was for a man who was bleeding from a gun shot wound to the leg that lacerated his femoral artery. My husband quickly applied a tourniquet and stopped the bleeding. The emergency room doctor said if he had not applied it correctly then the man would have bled out and died.

>

> He was also an arresting officer in the Walmart shooting. He worked a full shift that day and was on his way home to eat dinner with me and our son when he got the call about the shooter. He immediately went back to work and worked through the night and the entire next day, basically 48 hours to arrest the shooter and bring those families justice. He worked 33 hours straight to find a missing 14 year old girl in Thornton And bring her killer to justice. And I have many many more stories just like this. I have watched this man learn various departments in the agency, he is on swat, he was a detective, field training officer, driving instructor, dui instructor and now he is a Sergeant. He is currently the supervisor and role model And trainer for the new generation of officers. Don't you want this kind of officer training the next generation? Because I certainly do.

>

> These are the actions of a good officer. The kind of officer that is proud to protect his community and the kind of officer that this community should be proud to have and should fight to keep!

>

> Please support our good officers because why should these officers continue to protect and serve a community that does not support or protect them?

>

> I encourage you to consider the consequences of losing an officer of this caliber. With his experience, desire to protect his community, what would happen if you pass a bill that forces him to leave because we simply cannot afford the risk? You will end up with officers that 1. Do not care as much as he does and 2. Do not have the experience or desire to make themselves a better officer.

The media has put a one size fits all idea about law enforcement officers in the public's head. We have been threatened as a family. I am scared to be at home without my husband. I am scared to wear shirts that support the police for fear of retaliation. I am scared for our 3 year old son who is so proud of his dad and doesn't understand why people hate his dad so much when his dad has done nothing wrong.

These are the fears of every law enforcement officers family. Yet they continue to go out, every day and protect a community that spits on them and throws urine at them and bricks at them.

>

> There are bad officers out there and they need to be weeded out, but please don't push out the good ones in the process.

>

Nicole DeLuzio



Written Testimony and Witness Sign-up

Mike A to: committees.lcs.ga@state.co.us

06/10/2020 10:08 AM

The website wouldn't allow me to submit my testimony.

I would first like to introduce myself. My name is mike averett. I am a Colorado native. Born and raised in Littleton. I'm an army combat veteran and a police officer for the last decade. I'm a god fearing American who loves nothing more than to help the person next to me. I have given my entire adult life to serving my country and my community. I have never in my career been accused of misconduct. But this bill makes me fear being a cop. This bill leaves cops vulnerable. In a profession where it already hemorrhages good people because of the scrutiny we receive, this will only make things worse. This will force me to uproot and move somewhere that supports their police and cares about their quality of life. This will truly be detrimental to every community and the police the serve them in the state of Colorado.

Sent from my iPhone

June 10th, 2020

To the members of the House Finance Committee,

Elijah McClain - was only 23, when he was killed by the Aurora police department. Elijah was walking home when Aurora police put him in a chokehold and forced him on the ground for over 15 minutes. Paramedics then injected him with the sedative ketamine. McClain suffered a heart attack, fell into a coma and died once taken off life support on August 30th, six days after his encounter with officers. The original call to Aurora police department was only to report a ‘suspicious’ person – Elijah had committed no crime. The Aurora police department found that force applied during this altercation which eventually resulted in Elijah’s death was within policy and consistent with training as determined by a Force Review Board. There are current calls and petitions for Elijah’s case to be re-opened.

De’von Bailey - was only 19 years old when in August of 2019 he was shot multiple times in the back by two Colorado Springs police officers after someone called in a false robbery report. Neither officer warned De’Von that if he did not stop running they would shoot. In November of 2019, a grand jury found this fatal shooting of De’Von to be a justified act. The officers used Colorado’s fleeing felon law to justify their unjustifiable use of deadly force. His family has recently filed a federal lawsuit against the city claiming officers violated his constitutional rights through the use of excessive force.

Michael Marshall - was 50 years old when he was murdered while being held on charges of trespassing and disturbing the peace in 2015 in Denver’s downtown detention center. Michael’s death was ruled a homicide while he was being restrained on the floor by six deputies during a psychotic episode. The city settled a case that Michael Marshall’s family brought by paying out \$4.6 million dollars. Between 2014 to 2017 the city of Denver spent more than \$19 million to settle claims against its sheriff and police departments.

These names, and the numerous other names, of Coloradans who lost their lives to law enforcement should be at the forefront when we discuss SB20-217. Our communities should not live in fear of the officials who are meant to serve and protect us, but to date, we have failed to ensure our law enforcement is held accountable, and provide true justice for Colorado families.

My name is Andrea Stojavljevic, and I am the policy manager at Healthier Colorado. Healthier Colorado is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that seeks to provide every Coloradan the opportunity to live a healthier life through policy-oriented solutions.

Healthier Colorado urges your support of SB20-217, as there has been and continues to be a dire need to ensure Colorado's law enforcement uphold their mission in values and practice – which is to ensure **all** communities in Colorado are protected and safe. In particular, we know that this has been tragically the opposite for Black communities and communities of color in this state and nationwide. They are disproportionately impacted by police brutality, often with little to no action taken to hold these officers accountable, and taxpayers’ money being used to settle these cases with little to no change to policies that govern law enforcement.

Colorado is not immune to the police brutality we have witnessed in other states, as we have a history of brutality and lethal force unjustifiably used against Black communities and communities of color in our state. There simply cannot be justice for Colorado’s Black communities, and all our communities, until there is true accountability and change on this front. There simply cannot be a safe environment for our Black communities and communities of color to thrive in until there is true accountability on this front for our law enforcement.

Our present moment calls us to question not only the inequities in our systems that can lead to unnecessary and avoidable acts of violence from our law enforcement, but also to act and to act now.

This process starts with accountability, transparency, and clear guidelines for officers that they are not immune or above the law – all with which this bill provides. SB20-217 will among many elements require: body cams to be turned on and footage to be made public, end qualified immunity, reins in use of deadly force by officers, prevents the rehiring of bad officers, and requires more transparency of demographic data and reporting of excessive force to the public.

We must keep in mind that SB20-217 is not the end of this conversation, yet just the beginning. In order to fully tackle racial inequality and equity in Colorado, we must work deliberately to eradicate the health, socioeconomic, and educational disparities that disproportionately impact communities of color in Colorado. Today you can pass SB20-217, and Healthier Colorado urges your support.

Sincerely,
Andrea Stojavljevic
Policy Manager
Healthier Colorado

June 10, 2020

SB 217

To whom it may concern;

When there is sexual misconduct between a teacher and a student, we don't accuse the other teachers of sexually assaulting their students or accuse them of hiding their misconduct. We don't classify all teachers as pedophiles. Why? Because we love teachers. They dedicate their lives to our children. Many of those view our children as their own and would, without even thinking, put themselves in between danger and our babies. So, I ask, why are police different? They too, put themselves in between us and danger. They are the ones running towards gun shots, while everyone else runs the other direction. They are the ones running in to school shootings to protect our babies. They leave their families each day, knowing they may never come home. But because of the actions of a few, the good officer now carries a label that they are guilty until proven innocent. My name is Alyssa and I oppose Bill 217 without some deeply needed amendments.

For the last two years, My Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) and I have worked hard for the things we have. Each day he goes to work and endeavors to preserve and protect that public trust placed in him by adhering to the highest standards of honesty and ethical practice. We are building our future and when this bill was introduced, I slowly saw that future fade. Instead of looking forward to things most people do; getting married, building a house, having a family. My thoughts changed. Should we not legally get married? The house we are building, should we put it in my name? What about our kids, how do we protect them? Should our saving go in my name? How do we ensure that our lively hood is protected for when the day comes that someone sabotages this bill and looks to blame my officer for a pay day? If you don't think it'll happen, use Susan Holmes for an example. Nine days into the new year, she tried to sabotage the Red Flag Law, against an Officer who was already found justified in his actions. It is without a doubt, someone will try and exploit this bill when there, was in fact, no wrong doing by the Officer.

The way the bill is currently written already says an Officer is guilty until proven innocent. *"There is a permissive inference in any investigation or legal proceeding, excluding criminal proceedings against the peace officer, that the missing footage would have reflected misconduct by the peace officer."* Body cameras are necessary and useful to give eyes to the situation. However, a body camera is merely held on by magnets. Technology is known to fail. And we expect Officers to run into the most stressful of situations but don't give them any room for human error. So what happens in the event a body camera is accidentally knocked off in a physical altercation? With the way the bill is written, what happens if a suspect intentionally knocks off the Officer's body camera. The wording automatically declares the Officer of misconduct, even if he did what he was supposed to. What happens, in a life or death situation, the Officer acts in accordance to the Bill and turns on his body camera, but there is a technical malfunction? What if an Officer comes upon a situation where a hostage is being held at gun point? The Officers first thought and expectation from the public is to save the hostage. But wait, this bill says he is guilty unless his body camera is on and nothing malfunctions. So, while the Officer may have seconds to

save the life of a hostage or other victim, those seconds could be wasted while he goes through his mental check list to make sure he has checked all boxes for his innocence and to not jeopardize his family's lively hood. Officer's already have a split-second delay when it comes to reacting. The way this bill is worded does nothing, but add additional time to that delay, which will eventually result in the loss of life to a victim or an Officer. The Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution ensures due process. Even in Civil Law, the defendant is to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. The constitution does not say, "Everybody is promised due process, unless you are a cop. If you are a cop, you are automatically guilty, and this amendment does not apply to you." There is no fine print at the bottom of the constitution that excludes certain careers or professions from this constitutional right. The wording of this section of the bill needs to be amended. Officers have such a high expectation to protect the community, but there is nobody protecting them. And now laws are being created to do just the opposite. You have already stripped an Officer of his immunity. Stand behind the Officers and give them the benefit of the doubt that is given to everybody else. He is not a robot. If you still struggle with wanting to amend the wording, imagine if the immunity you carry as a House Representative or a Member of the Senate was stripped and the family of a victim or an officer killed in the line of duty, because of that added delay you have now added to them, could result in a civil lawsuit against you. What if the family could civilly sue every single House Representative or Member of the Senate whose name was on this bill and you all were held responsible for the victim or the Officer losing their life? If you carried that responsibility, would you still pass this bill as quickly as it has been. Or would you take the extra time and go through your mental check list to protect yourself.

Its not uncommon to know that law enforcement is not liked by everybody. Those individuals are typically the ones that don't adhere well to authority and don't believe laws apply to them. However, by the Senate and the House passing this bill and encouraging the assumption that all law enforcement is bad, paints an even bolder picture to the public and encourages the reckless and harmful actions towards law enforcement and including their families. I can personally speak to the fact that my LEO and I have been verbally attacked in public these last couple weeks, while walking to get our mail. Not because either of us had anything on that identified him as law enforcement, but just because we happen to live in the community he works, and he was recognized. The negative imagines the media has presented towards law enforcement and the support of that negative imagine from law makers puts a bigger target on our backs. We are scared for our families. Men and women who work the same team as my Officer, have had their homes vandalized. Home is where we are supposed to be safe and that is now taken away from us. We don't feel comfortable going in public in fear our LEO might get recognized and the fears of being followed home.

At some point, with all the expectations that law enforcement is faced with, the actual law is going to have to protect and support our Officers. I have already heard from numerous Officer who intend to turn in their badge when this bill is passed. Officer who don't intend to quit, will chose to protect their families over intervening in situations because of the heavy consequences this bill brings. You won't have to worry about defunding the police, because there will be none left. The good, honorable, men and women who took their oath seriously and show up daily to protect the public, will chose to protect their families instead.

I sincerely ask, for all of you, to quit pushing this bill through so quickly. There are going to be large ramifications if this bill is not carefully reviewed. Nobody hates bad cops, more than the good cops and their families.

The bill is concluded by saying *"The general assembly hereby finds, determines, declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety."* This bill has only brought the families of law enforcement fear for our peace, health and safety. In order to stand true to what you say this bill is intended to do, you need to take into consideration the target and danger you are placing on the families of the moms, dads, husbands, and wives that put their heart behind that badge every day. Please be open to the ideas and recommendations us and our families bring to this bill.

I would encourage everybody to participate in a ride along for a glimpse of what the people we love most, do every day. Thank you for your time and the additional considerations you will take before passing this bill.

Sincerely the woman standing behind a good cop,

-Nyssa



June 10, 2020

House Finance Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

RE: SB20-217 – Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

The League of Women Voters of Colorado is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our membership spans the state of Colorado with 19 local leagues operating in several regions of the state. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 217 – Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity.

LWVCO, along with the rest of our country, is devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of hundreds of people at the hands of the police. Police officers are entrusted to protect and serve the community—not abuse it. Black Americans should not have to live in constant fear of the officials that are meant to protect them. If we do not restore trust in our country’s police officers, the effective governance of our society and the ability of people to live peacefully is at risk.

The League of Women Voters believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and that individual rights should not be weakened or abridged. LWVCO has a long history of supporting transparent and accountable community policing practices, such as those set forth in Senate Bill 217.

Police officers are government officials who should be held accountable to the people they serve. As such, we demand humane, equitable, and constitutional policing in all Colorado communities. Police officers should not be able to escape liability when they violate laws, policies, and community trust.

We urge you to vote yes on Senate Bill 217.

Thank you,

Andrea Wilkins, Legislative Liaison
League of Women Voters of Colorado
1410 Grant Street, Suite B-204
Denver, CO 80203



Dear Legislators,

Mental Health Colorado supports SB 20-217 and requests your yes vote.

Mental health is a community issue. For too long we as a collective body have ignored the mental health effects of violence and systemic racism on individuals in our society. Now is the time for us to face an uncomfortable truth: we have not been addressing the break down between many of our citizens and the state authorities whose responsibility it is to protect those very citizens from harm. Rather, the history of law enforcement and the administration of justice in Colorado and the nation reveals the shameful truth that citizens of Color disproportionately experience harm at the very hands of those sworn to protect them.

SB 20-217 is a serious and thoughtful effort to provide some solutions to this reprehensible state of affairs. Most law enforcement officers are committed to serve and to protect. But there have been too many within law enforcement who have violated this principle, and too little commitment among law enforcement agencies to purging their own ranks of bad actors. Measures in SB 20-217 will help officers better respond to situations involving citizens, especially People of Color, whose historical experiences of injustice and brutality make them least trusting of officers. This bill sends a message to all that we as a State and people care about and are committed to upholding the rights of all of us not just some of us. It will help heal the divisions we face and help build trust and respect for law enforcement that has been eroded over the years.

Mental Health Colorado recognizes that mental health is all of us. WE are all in this together. With the cooperation and willingness that has been shown by public safety agencies to improving their response in serving our communities and the special attention that elected officials have shown in working together on this bill, we have a great start in healing the hurt and division currently affecting our community.

Please vote for SB 20-217.

Sincerely,

Moe Keller

Mental Health Colorado

303-478-6757

Dear Legislators,

Thank you for the work you have already done on SB20-217. As a law enforcement wife, and mother for four children, I support some of the changes that you have made thus far. However changes still need to be made. I am relying on the representatives of our police community, sworn officers, who know the day to day realities of the work to speak on behalf changes to the proposed bill. Today, I want to speak to you about the impact that the current civil unrest and the proposed legislation has had on our family.

SB20-217 sent ripples through the police community. The wording of the bill presumes guilt, presumes that officers are acting in a manner that tarnishes their badge, presumes that they are dishonest, and affords criminals the right to take everything from their families in the blink of an eye. The stress of worrying about the safety of my husband and our blue family during the riots has created a lot of sleepless night for me, but to add insult to injury, this legislation was proposed in the middle of it all.

For a police wife the worry can make it hard to breathe. It never leaves. It hangs around like a cloud. I worry that my husband will not come home from work at the end of his day. That he will be murdered for driving his police car, that someone will spit in his food, or expose him to a lethal chemical drug, that he will see something horrific that will forever change him, that he will be followed home by someone who wants to harm him and our family. I must remain strong while watching the media and lawmakers tear down the police and disrespect the honorable work that over 800,000 men and women do in this country every day because of the dishonorable behavior of a few.

My kids are afraid that their dad will be killed in the line of duty. The other night, my 9-year-old son said, "at least Dads not white, maybe he'll be ok, maybe they won't hate him so much." My teens have had to delete their social media accounts, their only contact to the

outside world during COVID because of the hatred they have experienced. We have had to hide the pride we feel for our officer, for fear that we will be attacked. We are experiencing the kind of prejudice that minority groups in the US have for years, hatred based on looks, and it's all being supported by the very organizations our officers protect!

So why do we do it? Why do we choose to live this life and deal with all of this every day? Because we wouldn't have our husbands or wives be anyone other than who they are. We wouldn't change who they are or the calling they have honored. There must be light in the darkness, there must be brave men and women willing to stand up for those who have been hurt by others. They were made for this. These are the men and women who have said "send me, I will go", the men and women who ran into the Aurora theater, ran into Columbine, held the hands of the dying in car accidents, calmed domestic disputes, stopped suicide attempts and have dealt with countless other atrocities to protect the public and maintain safety for us all. These are the men and women who stand in the street and get screamed at, spit at, hit with rocks and bottles of frozen urine, who vowed to stand up for the rights of the very protestors who hate them. We do it because we love them. We wouldn't change anything about them.

In any profession, there is always room for improvement. I ask you today to listen to the wisdom of the police representatives speaking, amend the law to support their requests. When you go home to your family tonight, think about how life is different for us, and what we sacrifice so you can sleep in peace.

Our police officers won't back down in the face of adversity, and neither will we.

Thank you for your time,

Jamie Merrion

Testimony in support of SB 217

Ron Ruggiero, President, SEIU Colorado

June 10, 2020

As SEIU, we are Colorado's janitors, healthcare, security, airport workers and state employees - black, brown, and white, from all walks of life - who fight to better our communities and workplaces through collective action. As service workers, we are the essential frontline workers our state depends on, now and always. Breonna Taylor was an EMT essential worker. George Floyd was a truck driver and security officer, an essential worker.

We are supporting the Law Enforcement Integrity and Accountability Act because our members and our larger community are affected by incidents of police brutality and we are committed to seeing it end. We believe this law brings more accountability to those police officers who abuse the authority that they are publicly entrusted with. As union members a core value of ours is solidarity and we must live that solidarity both at work and in our communities. Reforms like these are long overdue, and so we support them today.

Going a level deeper, we know that winning economic and racial justice go hand in hand--we cannot win one without the other. As we come together for justice, a handful of politicians throw out lies to divide us. They know that if we're made to fear each other, we'll look the other way while police officers meant to uphold the law harm our communities, and elected leaders meant to govern in our name, hand over millions to corporations to militarize local law enforcement and deny resources for the schools and healthcare we actually need.

As union members, we know what happens when there is a lack of accountability with a boss at work--this often leads to abuse of power. This bill provides a measured way to increase accountability for police officers in our state and will help begin the long process of ending the abuse and violation of human rights that some officers commit.

We are coming together across our union to say enough is enough, and to demand police accountability so that our communities are safe for every one of us. Police brutality has eroded public trust in those who are supposed to protect and serve our communities. By creating more transparency and accountability in policing we are protecting the safety of our Colorado communities and the officers sworn to protect them.

We strongly urge your support for SB 217. I would like to include the following powerful testimony from several of our members and workers organizing with SEIU.

Constance Bailey

I am writing to you to support the Law Enforcement Accountability Act because my community needs our police to have oversight and to be held to the same standards as the regular citizens of this country.

I have been treated differently by police officers because of my race. I was arrested for an offense that I should not have made but the treatment that I had was worse than other people who had been detained. The penalty I received was worse than others in the same circumstances.

In my community, we want to raise our children to believe that police are there to serve and protect us but unfortunately throughout history we have been forced to teach a different lesson. We have had to teach our children to obey and to protect themselves because they will be treated differently because of their race. In other communities people call the police in the event of an emergency but not in my community. We try to resolve our issues ourselves, if we can, because we fear police violence. We have to think twice before calling 911.

Body cameras are essential to insure that police officers are protecting people. The use of excessive force on civilians is totally uncalled for in many situations. A review board would make it much easier to take corrective actions when certain police officers break their oaths. Police officers need comprehensive training to handle all sorts of different situations and different people to ensure that everyone is protected. I am a mother and as a mother I fear everyday when my children go outside. I want them to be able to go outside and enjoy life without fear. If police officers commit wrongdoing they need to be held accountable. Not everyone is a crook but some bad apples have led to problems that must be addressed.

Thank you, again my name is Constance Bailey. I am your constituent my home zip code is 80247

Sammie Johnson - Baggage Handler, DIA

My name is Sammie Johnson and I am writing in support of the Police Accountability bill in Colorado. When I was a teenager in the 90s I had police pull me over for no reason saying I matched the description of someone. This also happened to a lot of people I knew who were

Black or Latino. I grew up in Aurora and went to West middle school and Central high school. We would get stopped walking to King Soopers and 7 Eleven. We knew to get to the store earlier in the night because the police would be messing with you later in the evening. They would run your name without any warrants to see if you'd been arrested before. I've also had police officers drop me off in neighborhoods I wasn't supposed to be in, take their badges off and say to me and my friends if you can beat me you'll go free and if I beat you you'll get arrested.

Back then there was a lot of racial profiling going on. I had friends who were straight A students getting profiled because they looked a certain way. I've worked beside Denver Police officers for a few years at the Salvation Army. With some officers it's a job they love doing and others are straight up cruel and love being out there arresting people and looking for someone messing up. The training they get at the academy isn't enough to be able to shoot or choke somebody for no reason. I haven't seen much difference now than it was when I was a kid. I think accountability for the police is a good first step but it won't solve everything. We have to start somewhere. Thank you for your time.

Lakisha Guion, works at DIA

Hello my name is Lakisha, I am a proud black women the reason i support the Police Accountability bill is i have a black son who has autism. I have never been so afraid for not only my life but for my sons life as well. He was attending school before all of the covid started, as you can imagine it is very difficult for me as a single parent. A month before we started homeschooling, he told me he didnt want to go to school anymore, this was very strange he loves school. Later that afternoon he told me the reason why he didn't want to go back, he started crying before the words started coming out of his mouth. He asked me why are we black? Black people are ugly!! I felt my heart drop how or why would he say and think this? He continued by saying some kid told him he was dirty and needed to shower alot to get rid of his color. I immediately call the teacher " who is white" i explained everything, she said she would talk to the little boy and his parents. 2 weeks passed by and i didnt hear from her. So i called her again, she said i talked to him and his parents and the little boy said it was a lie. I know my son didn't lie to me. The pain in his eyes was REAL!! I let it go feeling powerless. Like everyone i watch the news and updates. We were watching TV and he seen the video, i tried to change the channel but he seen the cops knee on Georges neck. He then said is it because his black? Is this going to happen to me when i grow up? I cried and hugged him and told him NO! This has to change for all of our black brothers, sisters! Thank you!

Corletta Hithon, homecare provider

Madam Speaker KC Becker, members of the Colorado Legislature, thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony. My name is Corletta Hithon, and I am writing to you to support the Law Enforcement Accountability Act because I am tired of my children walking out of the house and being scared they won't come back.

I am scared for my children every day. I'm scared they will be killed for walking while black. I've raised them to be responsible men with families and children. No one sees my children as people with degrees, families, jobs instead they see them as potential criminals. I'm tired of thinking that my voice has not been heard. I'm tired of looking for that phone call because something has happened to my son. I'm tired of people saying they know how it is because they don't. You can't be black one day and not the next.

It's not fair that you tell your children what they need to do to be a better person and be safe but then they get pulled over for just driving down the street or they get bullied at school. When is enough enough? You can only feel these things when they happen to you. The first thing people say is what did that person do to deserve what happened to them? Nothing!

You tell yourself you have to be so much stronger than everyone else. You have to make sure people don't see your weakness. The smallest thing just being in the wrong place at the wrong time can end a life. Sometimes people get so tired they don't even want to walk out the door; they are scared of their own existence. I want the police to take accountability to think about how they would feel if their son, their brother, their sister, their mother were stopped on the street and tasered or shot or murdered.

I believe the police have a problem evaluating what excessive force is. If I can't breathe, if an officer is standing on my chest but the officer is saying that I'm resisting, the officer doesn't understand how much force he's using. The reasoning that if a person is talking they can breathe, is just simply not true. Grown men on top of a child or woman or a man can lead to death or serious injury. I can't watch another video of police violence I have to tell people to stop sending them to me. We need to instruct police officers to use only the necessary force needed to keep everyone safe.

Body cameras are essential, everything should be monitored so that we know what happened. Everything is not black and white and we need to know where the grey is, we need to know what really happened. I support the Law Enforcement Accountability Act because I don't want to be afraid for my children anymore.

Thank you for reading this letter, again my name is Corletta Hithon I am your constituent my home zip code is 80205.

Serah Ezuodoye, Wheelchair Agent, DIA

Hi my name is Serah Ezuodoye and I'm writing to support the Police Accountability Bill. Police brutality has been taking too much of a toll on the lives of people. This has brought a lot of sadness to many homes and families and no one should be above the law. If you're not a law abiding citizen why should you be a police officer? Police officers that commit crimes need to be held accountable like all citizens, they are not above the law. Enough is enough! If this bill is passed we will have more sanity in the police force than we have now. Thank you.



June 10, 2020

Dear House Finance Committee Members:

Colorado Nonprofit Association (Association) urges your support of SB20-217, Concerning Law Enforcement Integrity. This bill is about police practices and law enforcement accountability, but it is also about taking meaningful action to end systemic racism.

The Association has 1,994 nonprofit, business and individual members statewide. All of the missions of the Association's members are impacted by systemic racism: health, education, arts, hunger, recreation – there is no exception. As people who have committed their careers to build and support thriving communities, nonprofits must act for racial justice or the work of the nonprofit sector will be in vain.

We have reached this moment in our nation and state because of a series of publicized acts of police violence against black lives. And we know there have been many before—too many. Black lives matter. Prohibiting excessive use of force and enacting meaningful accountability for law enforcement officers are significant steps to dismantling systemic racism.

We appreciate that the Senate recognized the urgency for change in our state, adopting the bill with broad bi-partisan support.

A year from now, five years from now, a generation from now, we want to be able to look back on 2020 as the tipping point for significant change because enough is enough, and silence was never an appropriate response.

Colorado Nonprofit Association urges your support of SB20-217.

Sincerely,

Renny Fagan
President & CEO

My name is Marcus Najera and I am representing myself as well as a member of Safe Access Colorado. I am obligated as a person of color that has seen success as a Biomedical Scientist. My passion for science has taken me to live in the following places. San Antonio Texas, Kirksville Missouri, Flint Michigan, Buffalo New York, New York, New York, Baltimore Maryland, San Marcos, Texas, Albuquerque New Mexico, New Haven North Connecticut, Boston Massachusetts, Tokyo Japan, Osaka Japan and Denver Colorado all of which I have had racial experiences with police officers. Often times people say that if you weren't doing anything wrong you won't experience brutality. I am Hispanic, although we do experience police brutality by large it is known those that are Black experience it at much higher rate. I am not a criminal and do not have any charges against me. Yet even as a Yale Fellow, participant at MIT and a scientist that has received national recognition for my work this still happens.

My first experience was during high school at the age of 16 I was pulled over and did not receive a traffic violation or charge. I was on my third date and was pulled out of my car and hit by 3 police officers while my date watched in a public setting. It was humiliating, and I never spoke to her again after I dropped her off at home immediately. I was so young and naive that I did not do anything about it tell my family, and friends. The second incident my best friend and I were running errands for my mother. My mother was a physician at the time and still is. I was pulled over and my friend and I were cuffed with our hands behind our back and through on the ground and the hood of the car. They had mentioned I fit the description of the person that they were after. I got scratches and bruises from our interactions as well as cut wrists from tight handcuffs. They got a call on their radios uncuffed both of us and left. Two years later I was arrested for a traffic violation where my sister and 2 of my best friends were with me. The officer pulled me out of the car with guns drawn on me and my face pressed against the pavement. I was arrested and went to the county magistrate, after being there for almost 24 hours. The judge told me that they had lost my paperwork and because of that I had no possibility for bail. I was sent to county jail and spent days in the floor where hardened criminals go for example those in jail for rape, assault, or murder. I kept to myself and read as many books as I could. Despite this I was beat up by inmates twice as it was noticeable that I did not belong there. It turned out that my mother was a psychiatrist for that jail and once she found out that's where I was. I immediately was released and after 1 year of trial the case was dropped. During this time, I was on house arrest, and could not attend college. My next experience I was tutoring students at a Starbucks next to the downtown campus. I was tutoring students on the subject of Nanotechnology and biomedical drug development. When a woman that was Caucasian started calling me a terrorist and called the police. It was an ordeal explaining that I was a tutor for the students that were present. The next incident I experienced was 3 people trying to car jack me at a gas station. I was stabbed and cut several times but was able to get away. I did not call the police for fear of what they could do to me. Lastly while in Japan I was detained because the Koban which is Japanese for police said I stole the bicycle I was currently riding. However, it was given to me to use by my boss at the Osaka Institute of Technology Nanomaterials Microdevice Research Center. It was documented because I was the first American at that University, and one of the people of color in the most prestigious nanotechnology program by the national science foundation the other 15 students came from ivy league backgrounds.

Today there is an opportunity to acknowledge that this has been a systemic problem most largely for people that are black in addition to all POC. Not only acknowledge it but to make important steps to correct the situation and be a part of the solution for Colorado residents.

I am so thankful for the hard work of the Senate on this bill. Seeing Republicans and Democrats working together to find common ground made me so hopeful for the future.

I was raised to believe that all people are equal, I was born in Mississippi, where my mother grew up, she chose to teach at an African American high school and when Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, she was in the classroom, teaching. That was 1964. She never thought anyone was less than she was, because she was never taught that, she grew up in the low income neighborhood. But she saw how others were treating her friends. She chose to teach in an all African American school because she wanted to help people see believed they deserved to have a good education.

She never taught me to hate. She taught me history, but never to hate. Quite the opposite, I was taught to love everyone. My best friends growing up were Hispanic and Lebanese. I have had many friends of many different skin tones, dated some, because I see everyone as equal. I have had bosses that were African American.

Unfortunately, I am now afraid of this legislature because my husband could be deemed guilty for a technical glitch.

My husband has been an officer in the state of Colorado for 23 years. He has served in Arvada, Georgetown, Aurora and Greenwood Village. In all of his 23 years, he has never discharged his gun and he has never had a use of force complaint. Let that sink in – twenty three years.

When I was 23 I said I would never date an officer because I thought they were bad. I believed cops were abusive, picked on people for nothing, you name it, all the negative you hear. I am here to tell you, none of that negative garbage is true.

Yet 4 years later, after seeing him come into my place of work over those years, I finally realized, he was genuine. It took me 4 years to see that, so I understand your perceptions because I once felt the same way. He treats everyone how he would want his family members treated. He knows people are fallible and that doesn't mean they are bad people.

He came home yesterday and told me that he had an issue with his dash cam. He used the remote to turn it on so that he could obtain a witness statement. Unfortunately, the video did not start, there was no way for him to know it didn't start. The dash cameras sometimes won't come on at all and sometimes come on when not prompted. This really worries me now because of the language in the bill.

Under this current draft this scenario would be assumed he did something nefarious. This is heartbreaking for an officer that has served for 23 years, without incident. He is one of the good cops that we desperately need to hold onto. Our cities are better because of officers like him, I have met most so many of them. There are good men and women that do this thankless job. Please remove this language from the bill.

After 23 years of law enforcement without a camera, he will not be conditioned to automatically reach to turn on a camera, especially in intense, immediate danger. He is now considering a new career, because he feels he cannot have his good character automatically deemed nefarious due to a technical glitch. He does not want to be personally liable if he has to fight for his life or while protecting others.

Due to the recent events that happened in Minneapolis, I fear for my life and my children's lives, I have never had this fear before. Our family must now carry this burden, even though we don't deserve it. We

have done nothing wrong. My husband has to take reports of graffiti in a neighborhood park that says, "Fuck the Police" and "Kill the Police". He has been spat on and called everything in the book, but yet, he still wears his badge and does the job because he wants to protect people. Good police officers hate bad officers because they make his job harder. Just look at where we are based on a few bad police. It is tragic.

Please take your time, please meet and speak with law enforcement in the communities. This does not need to be so rushed. Please go on a ride along with an officer, see how they work, how they help and protect the community. Please don't rush this through. We need our good officers.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony regarding SB20-217 – Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity. I am the wife of an El Paso County Sheriff's deputy. My husband has been a deputy for 12 years and has worked in the jail, in transport, and as a patrol deputy. His days are long and it is a rare occasion that he gets off of his shift on time because he is finishing up a call or making sure all his paperwork is completed. He takes great pride in his work, and never hesitates to help a citizen or a fellow officer as soon as he recognizes the need. When he is in uniform, he wears many figurative hats. He shows up to the call from a parent with an out of control child as a fellow parent, offering support and encouragement to work on effective communication and parenting strategies. He shows up to the call for a suicidal teenager as an ally, listening to her pain, making sure she knows that she is important, she is not alone, and that there are better days ahead. He is an educator, responding the call from someone asking how they can evict someone from their property by supplying them with the steps and resources that they need. He is also a protector, racing to the scene of a store where someone is pointing a gun at the owner and demanding money. He risks his life in situations every day to keep others safe, but he also does much more for the community than what is commonly portrayed by the media.

As the saying goes, nobody hates a bad cop more than a good cop. It is my belief that the purpose of this bill should be holding the bad cops accountable and enacting legislation that will discourage and prevent bad cops from doing harm. I support the amendments that were made to the bill by the Senate, as they changed the bill from what seemed to be an emotional attempt to get revenge for the actions of the bad cops that have transpired across the US, into a bill that will help prevent harm caused by bad cops and ensure that bad cops are held accountable for their actions.

I ask that you amend the bill to remove the presumption that an inactivated body cam is due to ill intent. The justice system is built upon the foundation of innocence until proven guilty, so that same standard should apply in this case as well. Given that law enforcement officers must make instantaneous decisions and jump into action at a moment's notice, they may not have the time to check their body cam before responding to a threat, or the body cam may malfunction, which is no fault of the officer because technology is infallible. Thank you for your time and hearing my testimony. As you continue to review this bill, please keep the purpose in mind, and remember that there are millions of law enforcement officers who make countless uplifting, positive, and necessary contributions to our society every day. Please don't let this bill prevent them from continuing to do that.

Kind Regards,

Allison Boyne



These children here are the children of a police officer. Their dad is a great police officer. They proudly announce to anyone that will listen "My daddy is a police officer!" The idea that this bill presumes that he has ANY nefarious intentions hurts my heart. It hurts my heart knowing that these two kids have no idea that there are people in this world that hate their daddy. They have no idea that he has spent the last week getting yelled at, spit on, and flipped off.

He is the SRO of the lowest income and highest minority school in his city. He loves each of those kids like he does his own. He plays tether ball with them. He has talks with them when they need a listening ear. He even sat down with one of his

students to help her file taxes after she got her first job. He is a great cop, and there are so many out there like him.

The first thing my husband said when he saw the video of George Floyd's murder was "Wow. Those cops deserve to go to jail for a long time!" No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop...and my husband is a good cop. Please do not punish him and his fellow good officers for the actions of a few. Please, do not punish the father of my children for an act he never committed, and never condoned.

To Committee Members and Colorado Legislators Sponsoring, Debating and Supporting SB 20-217:

The last couple of weeks have been rough. An isolated incident of police violence against a citizen who was in the commission of a crime has caused some to take all your disdain for that particular police officer and place it on the shoulders of the entire community of police officers. Shame on you!

The very culture of judging the group because of the one is exactly what this country is battling right now. The black community doesn't want to be judged by the actions of the violent gang population within it and neither does a police force want to be judged by the reckless action of the few within it.

The precedence that you seek to make with SB20-217 is a dangerous one at best. Certain to backfire. Kindled by a fire that is still burning, you seek legislation without first utilizing resources to get it right. Did you assemble a task force of Colorado police chiefs or individuals with decades of law enforcement experience to counsel you in the penning of this bill? It is obvious you did not. In fact, your desire to arm-chair-quarterback the actions of law enforcement demonstrates your 'privilege' in full view of your constituency. With less than zero experience in law enforcement you chose to write a bill for which you are not qualified to write.

The hot topic of this bill is Qualified Immunity. Removing Qualified Immunity from our police officers will cause them to question the split-second decisions they must make every day, which in turn puts their lives in greater jeopardy and compromises their family's financial welfare. We will see officers refuse to put themselves in harms way because every criminal will seek civil settlements. We will see good officers walk away from this profession because you have made it impossible to do what serves the community and also protects the wellbeing of the officer. Those officers that remain in their positions will become security guards and report takers and the lawless of this state will prevail.

Addressing the language included in the protesting portion of the bill requires some patience on my part, because maybe you don't know. Maybe you don't know that rocks were being flung at officers via lacrosse sticks and ball bearings were being shot via sling shots at officers. That frozen water bottles taken to uncovered portions of their bodies is painful. And yet.....they showed up the next day to face the same abuse. Maybe you actually thought that the protests were peaceful. I'll lend you the benefit of the doubt. Did you at any time question police officers regarding the challenges that they faced in the protests that turned into riots? At any time did you request a list of the types of abuse and injuries that were sustained by police officers during the 'peaceful' protest? Did you ask how many weapons were recovered and the nature of the weapons that were recovered during the 'peaceful' protests? Based on your bill, you certainly did not. Again, you relied on the emotions surrounding the fire rather than the facts surrounding the fire.

As a side note, the paragraph on preventing the rehiring of 'untruthful' officers should be the standard for our legislators as well – John Hickenlooper's ethics violations would be my current example, however if examination were made of each of our legislator's campaigns, in regard to 'truthfulness', I am certain our legislators would be few. Who wants to write that bill?

In short, this bill is reckless, short-sighted and rushed. The input to make this legislation what it should be would require you to include resources far beyond your chamber.

Sheryl Bishop

Mandatory Body Cams Are an Essential Part of Addressing and Remediating the Police Brutality Public Health Crisis Among African Americans

Cops give a damn about a negro
Pull the trigger, kill a nigga, he's a hero

- Changes, *Tupac Shakur* (1998)

Police brutality is fundamentally an issue of race inequality. While certainly people of all colors, and creeds, can become victims of police brutality, black men and women have suffered this ignominious evil since the founding of our country. Indeed, in the South of the United States, police forces were inescapably intertwined with the institution of slavery:

The genesis of the modern police organization in the South is the "Slave Patrol" (Platt 1982). The first formal slave patrol was created in the Carolina colonies in 1704 (Reichel 1992). Slave patrols had three primary functions: (1) to chase down, apprehend, and return to their owners, runaway slaves; (2) to provide a form of organized terror to deter slave revolts; and, (3) to maintain a form of discipline for slave-workers who were subject to summary justice, outside of the law, if they violated any plantation rules. Following the Civil War, these vigilante-style organizations evolved in modern Southern police departments primarily as a means of controlling freed slaves who were now laborers working in an agricultural caste system, and enforcing "Jim Crow" segregation laws, designed to deny freed slaves equal rights and access to the political system.¹

As a perfect storm of violence, quarantine, political clout, and righteous rage foments a most understandable rising of people across the country, the time is ripe to bring about change in law enforcement. Colorado is taking the moment, by the horns, and attempting to pass [SB20-217](#), the Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Bill, which includes a provision mandating body cams.

Studies regarding the use of body cams underscore that body cams are a disinfectant, not panacea. It is important to understand that distinction and their purpose when advocating for their presence with every officer. SB20-217, now making its way through the Colorado legislature, will surely trigger these types of conversations. So here is a brief summary of why mandating body cams on law enforcement is critical.

What Body Cams Achieve in Theory.

¹ Dr. Gary Potter, *The History of Policing in the United States, Part 1*, EKU Police Studies Online, <https://plsonline.eku.edu/insidelook/history-policing-united-states-part-1#:~:text=In%201838%2C%20the%20city%20of,Lundman%201980%3B%20Lynch%201984>). (last accessed June 7, 2020).

According to a 2018 article by Brett Chapman, published on the [National Institute of Justice](#), only one third of U.S. municipal police departments had implemented use of body-worn cameras.² A 2019 article in the Christian Monitor indicated that number may be closer to two thirds.³ SB20-217 would push Colorado into that small but growing group. Proponents of body cams point to the following as reasons for requiring body-worn cameras on officers:

- Transparency. If police officers' actions are recorded and available for review, they are deemed transparent. When that happens, the legitimacy of policing increases. Much like people feel that people shouldn't have "anything to hide," the same is true for police officers. They shouldn't have "anything to hide."
- Quicker resolution. When disputes arise between an officer's and a civilian's account, a camera is *one* means to dispel those disputes and provide a third-party neutral or investigator something to base themselves on, rather than people's accounts of events. Having this allows disputes to be put to bed quicker.
- Corroborating evidence. Footage can assist officers in completing their own paperwork (they can record and then take down information). Footage will also help civil and criminal investigations when law enforcement officers engage in excessive use of force and/or lethal incidents.
- Training opportunities. Officers who can review footage can also use that footage (or have it used by others) to illustrate proper and improper handling of situations. This would be a critical tool to provide feedback using real life scenarios. (In that respect, it is similar to M&Ms physicians undergo when someone is hurt or dies while receiving medical care).

What Do Body Cams Achieve in Practice.

In 2014, the Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center conducted body cam research in the United Kingdom.⁴ The study found that body cams had several benefits for law enforcement officers themselves. Interactions with members of the public were more positive (because both parties to the interaction knew they were being recorded), crime was down, citizen complaints were down, arrests and guilty pleas were up.

Studies were also conducted in the United States. Earlier studies were apparently plagued with methodological gaps, but later ones were more robust.⁵ A 2014 by the Arizona State University (funded through the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Smart Policing Initiative) found that officers with body-worn cameras were more productive in making arrests, had fewer complaints, and of

² Brian A. Reaves, *Local Police Departments, 2013: Equipment and Technology*, Bulletin, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, July 2015, NCJ 248767, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/lpd13et.pdf> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

³ Patrik Jonsson, *The Body Cam Revolution: What It Has, and Hasn't, Accomplished* (Aug. 9, 2019), <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Justice/2019/0809/The-body-cam-revolution-What-it-has-and-hasn-t-accomplished> (Last accessed June 7, 2020).

⁴ White, *Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras*.

⁵ See Brian Reaves, *Body Worn Cameras: What the Evidence Tells Us*, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/body-worn-cameras-what-evidence-tells-us#noteReference5> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

those complaints a larger percentage were resolved in their favor.⁶ Another study, conducted with the Rialto (California) Police Department reached the same conclusions, and saw a decrease in use-of-force incidents.⁷ “During the 12-month Rialto experiment, use-of-force by officers wearing cameras fell by 59 percent and complaints against officers dropped by 87 percent compared to the previous year’s totals, the article states.”⁸ Other researchers at Arizona State University concluded that officers with body cams were more sensitive to their own interactions due to possible scrutiny of the footage by their superiors.⁹ Larger studies support these conclusions.

A 2016 global, multisite randomized controlled trial by research Barak Ariel found that the number of use-of-force incidents was impacted by police officers’ discretion in the timing of turning on their body cams.¹⁰ Use of force incidents went down when officers had to turn on their cameras upon arrival at the scene compared to situations where officers had more discretion regarding when they were allowed to turn on their cameras. This result was replicated in a 2017 CAN research conducted in a randomized fashion on 400 Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department officers.¹¹

Despite this, more recently, review of a large body of research indicates that these differences in behavior are not as marked as one would think. Opponents of mandatory body cams point to this as a reason not to require body cams. However, what they miss is that in those few cases where there is a use of force, and it *actually* results in an indictment, video footage is almost always a part of that equation. Campaign Zero, a group that proposes policies to reduce police shootings, says as much on its website, “Nearly every case where a police officer was charged with a crime for killing a civilian in 2015 relied on video evidence showing the officer's actions.”¹²

Mandating Body Cams is Non-Negotiable in the Fight Against Systemic Racism.

Based on the research, therefore, there are two major reasons to mandate body cameras: 1) they lead to a decrease in use of force when turning them on upon arrival at the scene is non-discretionary and 2) it appears that holding abusive law enforcement officers accountable without such videos is near impossible. In other words, not only do body cams create a safer

⁶ Charles Katz, David Choate, Justin Ready, and Lidia Nuno, “Evaluating the Impact of Officer Worn Body Cameras in the Phoenix Police Department” (Phoenix, AZ: Center for Violence & Community Safety, Arizona State University, 2015).

⁷ Barak Ariel, William A. Farrar, and Alex Sutherland, “The Effect of Police Body-Worn Cameras on Use of Force and Citizens’ Complaints against the Police: A Randomized Controlled Trial,” *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 31 no. 3 (2015): 509-535.

⁸ Nat’l Police Foundation, *Body-worn camera study by Executive Fellow Chief Tony Farrar is published in scientific journal*, <https://www.policefoundation.org/body-worn-camera-study-by-executive-fellow-chief-tony-farrar-is-published-in-scientific-journal/> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

⁹ Justin T. Ready and Jacob T.N. Young, “The Impact of On-Officer Video Cameras on Police-Citizen Contacts: Findings from a Controlled Experiment in Mesa, AZ,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 11 no. 3 (2015): 445-458.

¹⁰ Barak Ariel, Alex Sutherland, Darren Henstock, Josh Young, Paul Drover, Jayne Sykes, Simon Megicks, and Ryan Henderson, “Report: Increases in Police Use of Force in the Presence of Body-Worn Cameras Are Driven by Officer Discretion: A Protocol-Based Subgroup Analysis of Ten Randomized Experiments,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 12 no. 3 (2016): 453-463.

¹¹ Anthony Braga, James R. Coldren, William Sousa, Denise Rodriguez, and Omer Alper, *The Benefits of Body-Worn Cameras: New Findings from a Randomized Controlled Trial at the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, December 2017.

¹² Campaign Zero, <https://www.joincampaignzero.org/film-the-police> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

society they also create the reality of justice in a country where law enforcement abuse has gone, by and large, unpunished. This is especially vital in a country where this unpunished violence is directed at our black citizenry. And just to reiterate the point, African Americans are disproportionately victims of police brutality, and they have been for as long as police forces have existed.

As reported by Al Jazeera on May 31, 2020, African Americans are two-and-a-half times more likely as white Americans to be killed by the police even though they only make up 13% of the US population.¹³ In Minnesota, where Black Americans are 5% of the population, they consist of 20% of those killed by police.¹⁴ Another way to present the data is that black people are 24% of those killed by police despite being only 13% of the population.¹⁵ Police brutality is an African American healthcare crisis and we have a moral obligation to do something about it. Silence or apathy means to allow the continued slaughter of black men and women.

If we have a tool that can move us towards justice, both as to prevention and accountability of law enforcement abuses, and the injustice of not having this measure is borne by one particular segment of our society, then we *must* take it upon ourselves to use that tool. This is not just good policy, it is a moral imperative. Doing anything else is simply telling our black brothers and sisters that we don't give a damn about them or their children: there is no excuse for that.

¹³ Mohammed Haddad, *Mapping US Police Killings of Black Americans*, (May 31, 2020) <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2020/05/mapping-police-killings-black-americans-200531105741757.html> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

¹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁵ <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/> (last accessed June 7, 2020).

SUBMITTED WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Committee	House Finance				
Meeting Date	06/10/2020 Upon Adjournment				
Bill Number	First Name	Last Name	Position	Representing	Testifying Text of Testimony
SB20-217	Abigail	Negley	For	The Arc of Colorado	Uploaded file
SB20-217	Adison	Petti	For	Self	Submitted text <p>I support SB20-217. I would like to provide testimony for events on Saturday May 30th in Colorado Springs. I was present at peaceful protests from 2 pm on after contacting a legal observer and makeshift community marshalls to help ensure the safety of those assembled, even contacting a City Council to alert them to social media threats against peaceful protesters. Around 7 PM I witnessed the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) begin deploying tear gas into a group of teenagers and peaceful protesters at extremely close range. These actions constitute the intent to incite riot by CSPD, not by the those peacefully and therefore lawfully assembled as community protesters. In other words, peaceful protests were incited to riot by the Colorado Springs Police Department and their accomplices, whose tactical operations included the use of both gas and flash grenades thrown by hand (commonly referred to as canisters); projectile weaponry which may include either rubber bullets or live rounds; and failure to intervene in pedestrian intimidation by both civilian and unmarked-police-government-or security vehicles. Throughout these events, the city failed to extend an appropriate peace keeping strategy, including any visible safety plan for common or traumatic injuries. As a result of CSPD's decision to incite riot, alongside other policing departments across the United States, non-uniformed citizens rendered mutual aid to children, teenagers, and adults including those who required immediate medical attention for conditions like chemical exposure, asthma, trips and falls of varying severity, etc. Individuals like, a former Army Combat Medic, were not only arrested but violently assaulted by CSPD because of their decision to stay and render medical aid as described above. Today those same individuals face a criminal obstruction charge, costing them and their families additional time, resources, and energy to defend themselves against the police brutality they themselves experienced while answering a call to protect and serve. I would also like to address the contagion concern surrounding COVID-19, including the refusal of masks, soap, and sanitizer at the Criminal Justice Center. These items were available to distribute from medic bags confiscated by police. Additionally, dozens of people used the same 2 phones that were not sanitized between use and multiple people were held in close quarters together overnight rather than charged and released.</p>
SB20-217	Alex	Cyphers	For	Self	Submitted text <p>Hello,</p> <p>I would like to express my deep support for House Finance bill SB20-217. I am a 6 foot 5 white male, 47 years old. Police have always treated me as if I am one of their pals. They joke around with me and seem to want to be friends immediately. I have seen first hand the incredible change of attitude towards my friends that are not white. Time and time again in my life, an officer will walk by me and go straight to someone that does not have white skin. I cannot explain why I have been in so many circumstances where police respond, it is just something that happens to me often. Witnessing altercations at sporting events, etc. It is not a coincidence that they like me, it's because I'm a big white guy, like most of them. They need immediate training for racial bias, but I realize this is not the topic at hand.</p> <p>Accountability and removing the use of weapons of force against peaceful protestors must happen immediately to protect our citizens. We have all witnessed in the last week that if police don't attack protestors, the likelihood of protestors becoming violent or destroying property is very small. Unfortunately, we now know that the more police try to suppress and attack innocent people, the more they will fight back. This is only logical in the fight or flight response of mankind.</p> <p>Removing problem officers from working in the state permanently is extremely important. Even though the "only a few bad apples" theory is not even remotely true, we must remove all police that have been convicted of violations permanently. It is not ok for an officer to be fired from the Denver police force and then show up working for another local police department the next week.</p> <p>It is especially important to pass the law for police officers to intervene when they see excessive use of force. We've seen time and time again in our nation policemen stand watch while one of their fellow officers kills a civilian. "I'm only doing my job" is the line Nazis used during the Holocaust. A police officer's job is to PROTECT and to SERVE. Please help them get back to realizing the citizens are not the enemy by passing this bill. Help them work with us to improve our city, not against us.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Alex Cyphers</p>
SB20-217	Alexandria	Topp	Amend	Self	Uploaded file
SB20-217	Ali	McGuinnis	Against	Self	Uploaded file

SB20-217	Alison	Good	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am a native here in Colorado and have always loved this state. One of the reasons I love this state is that there are so many amazing men and women who are officers that work hard to protect their community that they love so dearly. We have been dealing with infertility for the past 4 years and we were getting ready to do a transfer of our embryo and I am very hesitant due to the amount of stress this bill is putting on our family and what it may mean for our future with potential law suits and what it may mean financially. I fear that the media, leaders and legislators have been demonizing our Law Enforcement instead of protecting the many good men and women in this field because of one bad officer. I don't know any good officer that agrees with what happened to George Floyd. They all feel what happened was wrong but they feel they are being punished for the officer that committed this crime. I also believe we need to protect the victims who will be filmed on the body cameras. I don't believe the videos should be released to the public for one to protect the victims and second I don't think our children should have access to them. I believe they see enough and with the videos of George Floyd and the Retired Officer David Dorn who was shot and killed while someone recorded him and didn't even try to help him or comfort him in his last moments on this earth. I do believe we need to remove the language that implies if the camera wasn't working the officer is presumed to be guilty. What if the battery dies or it gets accidentally turned off or something else happens. Please remember that one bad officer is not every single officer that works hard to protect their community and to support their family. I am more proud of my husband with each day that passes of his integrity and humility with the current environment. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.</p> <p>Thank you, Alison Good</p>
SB20-217	Alison	Rodenburg	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Good evening Madame Chair and members of the committee. I ask you to support SB 217 for Law Enforcement Accountability. This is the minimum that needs to be done to begin overhauling a system that does not equally protect and serve.</p> <p>As a nurse I am rightfully expected to honor my patients' rights, even with the prevalent violence in healthcare. Nurses do not have qualified immunity and we shouldn't. And neither should police officers.</p> <p>Thank you for your time</p>
SB20-217	Allison	Boyne	Amend	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Alysa	Bradley	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>As a daughter, niece and now a wife of a police officer, I have lived my life surrounded by men and women who would willingly give their life to protect a stranger. I live with the fact that I could lose my husband, father, step-father, or two uncles because of this. My husband has committed himself to being the best police officer he can be. He has a master's degree in criminal justice, he is less lethal certified, crisis intervention certified, and attends any other trainings he can to broaden the way he can help his community. Fort Collins Police Department is blessed to have an on-call psychologist that counsels officers and their families, which we are very thankful for. With the rise in disrespect and bias towards police officers, I am worried about not only my husband's safety but myself and my family's safety. To the men and women who put biases aside, who give all that they can to protect their communities, please remember to put biases aside while amending this bill. I believe in body cameras; I do not believe in releasing the body camera footage until an investigation has been complete to protect the safety of the victims. Having the law enforcement officers and their families fall responsible financially should not be a burden that each officer and their families take on while working. In this bill please take into note the difference between a riot and a protest, please acknowledge that with tense issues come emotions, raw emotions, and with emotions running high sometimes come reactions, which we have seen most recently can turn violent. Please allow action when needed to control a riot or instead of putting this control on police officers just call the National Guard. My plea is that you all remember that law enforcement officers are human, they are not perfect, they have emotions. They are put into situations that no one else wants to be in. Please put biases aside, remember officers are human, and remember the emotions that go into changes. We have seen great things come from emotional changes, and we also have seen the negatives behind emotional changes. Remember there are moms and dads, brothers, and sisters across this state that their children and families await their return home from protecting their communities, remember them while amending this bill.</p> <p>Thank you, Alysa Bradley</p>

SB20-217	Amanda	Gamboa	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>My husband became a police officer because he loves people and the aspect of a team. He absolutely loves his job. My husband and I were so maddened when he saw what happened to George Floyd and our hearts go out to his family and friends. We as a family have been proud police supporters from the very beginning of my husbands career but because of recent events, we have to hide that. I cried my eyes out when I had to take my thin blue line sticker off my car because we are afraid to advertise his profession. I tell him every time he leaves the house to “have fun and be safe” but as of lately that doesn’t seem like enough. I’m terrified of how people will react to him being on the streets or the ramifications we would have to endure if he made a mistake while at work.</p> <p>We appreciate the amendments that have been made thus far to the bill however, we would like to see more regarding if a police officer forgets to turn on his body cam. There are moments where an officer doesn’t have time to think and has to react in less than a second. We would also like to see more privacy for the victims or people reporting a crime.</p> <p>My husband has saved a little boy from being beaten from his dad. He has given CPR to an 11 year old that was shot several times. He bought two kids coats because they were walking to school in tshirts in the snow. He has bought kids that were left alone in a scary situation snacks from the gas station and made them laugh so in the moment they were a little less scared. He has protected this community and loves doing it. My husband has done so many great things during his time as a cop. The public doesn’t hear about these great things, they only hear the bad. Please don’t let the good be overshadowed by the bad. My husband has never been afraid or nervous to go to work until now. Police are made to look like villains. The media has demonized police and we need to show that the majority of cops are good because that’s the truth.</p> <p>My husband and all the cops I know personally are doing this job for the right reasons. They do their best to help people even when those people hate them. They are human and don’t deserve to be treated the way cops are being treated right now, no one does. I’m so sorry for what happened to George Floyd but know that that does not represent my husband or the badge. Please don’t pass this bill without thinking about those amazing officers that are here to help the people.</p>
SB20-217	Amanda	Cadran	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>To the members of the House Finance Committee, all Colorado legislators and other members of our local and state governments,</p> <p>I am a registered Republican in Adams County, and I am writing today with a heartfelt, thoughtful and motivated request to please support SB20-217.</p> <p>Our communities should not live in fear of the officials who are meant to serve and protect us. This is the very definition of liberty that our government speaks so highly of, yet has been eroded consistently for centuries.</p> <p>Please defend this bill and ensure it passes. We must end the practice of shielding law enforcement officers from accountability and denying families justice. This type of enablement is the opposite of what our country espouses; it limits the ability of law enforcement officers to stand up for what they know is right, and removes many of the freedoms from others that should be a right, not a privilege based on skin color or other determining factor.</p> <p>I support police accountability because for too long, police, their unions and others have been allowed to exert far too much centralized power. They have been able to wield that power because of government enabled protections. This has led to a broken system and encroachment of government in giving officers leniency based on technicalities. Our actions should be considered using the same criteria. The time to start this process is now.</p> <p>Do not let perfect be the enemy of good. This bill is a good bill, it is a start, and we will never know what may change if we continue to hope for each and every jurisdiction and officer to make those decisions for themselves. As a lifelong registered Libertarian and now Republican, I hope that this message reaches you and helps you consider this viewpoint from a perspective based on what our party is founded on, not what it has become. I welcome the opportunity to speak further.</p> <p>Thank you, Amanda Cadran Thornton, CO 80602 -- Amanda M. Cadran, PhD</p>

SB20-217	Analiese	Kovisto	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>I strongly support the passing of SB20-217 in order to make Colorado a more fair, safe place for all residents alike.</p> <p>I know that it was initially seen as revenge or a reaction to the current events, but it is something that our state desperately needs. No one should be worried that they will be stripped of their rights, or worse, could lose their life due to a simple stop by law enforcement.</p> <p>Every job requires accountability, and when law enforcement is responsible for making the public safer, they should be held accountable to the public.</p> <p>Please, pass this bill so we can start the reform process.</p> <p>With all due respect,</p> <p>Analiese M. Kovisto Denver Resident</p>
SB20-217	Anders	Mavis	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Andrea	Stojisavljevic	For	Healthier Colorado	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Andrea	Wilkins	For	League of Women Voters of Colorado	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Anne	Murlowski	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear Representatives,</p> <p>This was a long week for my husband and I, stressed about the impacts of SB20-217 on his career.</p> <p>Trying to share our concerns about this bill has cost us friendships and separated us from family. Having concerns about the bill was interpreted not that we were active in the democratic process, but that we had something to hide.</p> <p>My husband is always a police officer, on and off duty, and I am always a police wife. The prejudice we've experienced against law enforcement is painful and isolating.</p> <p>I am proud of the work the Senators did to amend the bill to protect our family and hope to see more amendments that address victims confidentiality and remove that officers identify race for all contacts. Guessing a community members race as a requirement is not how to combat racism.</p> <p>Please act in the good faith that you ask my spouse to, and do good by all families in Colorado.</p> <p>Anne Murlowski</p>
SB20-217	Anne	Salazar	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Good afternoon, my husband is a 15-year veteran of the police force. He's an honorable man, police officer, husband & father. He's the epitome of grace under pressure, calm & respect. He upholds and respects the law; he respects human beings. He was the responding officer to 2 high profile cases that involved the deaths of 2 children. Instead of self-destruction or hatred, he took these tragedies and turned them into something positive for the Ridgeway and Bigelow families. He worked within the community to help raise over \$10,000 for these families foundations which in turn were used to better the community. This is dedication, hard work and how he gives back & finds purpose. We hold our blue family close in our hearts. We pray for their safety & that they are protected & make it home to us. I will ALWAYS respect the badge, honor those who wear it proudly and wave both my American and Thin Blue Line flag freely at my home. I pray for the human race to treat them with respect, dignity, empathy and compassion. I stand behind the thin blue line and I am proud to call all of them my family. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Anne	Robinson	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>My future son-in-law is a policeman. I pray every time he leaves for work. I am concerned for his safety. They have a 19 month old baby boy, my only grandson and I don't want to see him grow up without a father.</p> <p>I think that more thought needs to be put into the fact that if a policeman turns off his body can it means he's up to dishonorable actions. It could be to honor others privacy; Domestic abuse, maybe a cold is involved?</p> <p>I believe the majority of men and women inlaw enforcement are honorable people who want to keep us safe. Please reconsider the effects of the bill on people just trying to serve our county!</p>

SB20-217	Anthony	Tribuzio	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>Hello, my name is Anthony Tribuzio. I've been a resident of Colorado since I was born, minus a few years I spent in the Army. I began my Law Enforcement career in 2015. I love my job, the residents I serve, and mostly my state and country. I do believe there needs to be some kind of reform to enhance Police integrity. I do however feel sb20-217 is not the correct way to solve our issue. I support portions of bill 217 i.e body cameras. I however do not support Law Enforcement losing qualified immunity and good faith opening it up to criminals being able to personally sue a law enforcement officer for up to \$25,000. The burden of proof to win a civil suit is minimal. Everyday officers have to make split second decisions. Make the wrong decision, even if no one is hurt in any way, that officer can now lose everything. This is going to cause officers to hesitate, in any and every situation. Officers will not be able to effectively do their job in fear that if they make a minuscule mistake their 17 month old son and wife will become homeless. This is also going to cause many officers to hang up their vest. It will create recruitment issues. Life and death 911 calls will go un answered do to lack of availability of law enforcement officers. Bill 217 does not allow a officer to carry liability insurance for this... there is not another profession that doesnt allow for insurance. I've worked with a bad cop and myself and every other officer that worked with him went to our cammand staff and reported him. He is no longer a law enforcement officer. Again, I believe there does need to be change but bill 217 is not the change we need. It will hurt law enforcement, law enforment families, as well as the entire community of Colorado. Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Anthony Tribuzio</p>
SB20-217	Antonia	Nesvold	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>First off thank you so much for the amendments already made to the bill. It does provide a sense of relief to know that we won't lose our home.</p> <p>I thought due process was that we all were presumed innocent until proven guilty, yet as the bill stands it is presuming all cops are guilty based on the actions of a few. We are demonizing an entire occupation based on the choices of a very small percentage. Don't get me wrong, no one hates a bad cop, more than a good cop and their spouse, because it unfortunately does end up reflecting negatively on on all of law enforcement. We need to remember that on a regular basis there are men and women that do this job day and night without incident for the course of their entire career, and they do it to serve their community.</p> <p>We need to remove the language in the bill that implies that an officer is hiding something simply because their body camera isn't on. Most of the law enforcement I know value their body cams because it does capture the truth and they get frustrated when their body cams do not work. After all, the way this bill is written, law enforcement and their presumptive guilt or innocence is dependent upon technology. There are several situations that may occur that could cause the camera to not have been turned on. Dead batteries, camera malfunction, the need to race into a situation that simply doesn't allow time to turn on a camera. Its presumptive, and assuming.</p> <p>My kids can't even talk about their dad being an officer at this time in their lives as it brings hate and anger from other kids an families that only get to hear and see the bad that happens in the news. Recently, the sister of my youngest daughters best friend began posting on social media, celebrating the recent deaths and assaults on law enforcement and calling for more violence. Being an officer or a family of an officer used to bring pride and now it seems we have to hide who their dad is for fear of their safety.</p>
SB20-217	Apryl	Alexander	For	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Arash	Jahanian	For	Meyer Law Office, P.C.	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Ashley	Averett	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am a wife of a police officer in the state of Colorado, born and raised, we have lived in a few different states where my husband was a cop, but moved back home because of the love for our State. As I write this, crying, I cannot help but think that this state has abandoned their law enforcement who fight to keep all the citizens safe on the streets daily. I understand there have been amendments to this bill, and I as a wife appreciate that some of the concerns were addressed and changed, but what is being asked is going to force many officers to leave their profession in fear of being sued, thrown to the wolves, and the losst of everything. As a wife, I fear daily that my husband returns home and that everyone he encounters returns home. It is unfortunate that there are the bad seeds within law enforcement that give all cops a bad name, but there are more good cops than bad cops and this bill is punishing the good cops and their family's. If this bill passes our family will have no choice but to leave this state because we cannot afford to be in law enforcement under this bill. It will cause undue stress on the job, and financial hardship if something were to happen. Police officers are PEOPLE who have CHOSEN to serve and protect and are getting punished for wanting to do good. It takes a special person to be an officer of the law and deal with the many people and everyone's issues daily. If this bill gets passed many officers will leave the profession and then who will the citizens call if they need help? The people they are trying to get rid of and stop them from doing their job to keep the general public safe? No one hears about all the good things cops do, helping the elderly, saving lives, running into harms way to get a person to safety, working during the covid pandemic, working 24/7, keeping the streets safe, saving spouse from domestic abuse etc.. Those who are for this bill have NEVER been in an officers shoes or a police wives shoes, you have no idea what its like to put on 25lbs of gear to stay safe and to keep the community safe, you have no idea what its like to get spat on, hit, kicked, shot at, called names, ridiculed when one bad cop does something that the media grabs a hold of, you have no idea how hard this profession is and this bill will make it harder for law enforcement to keep the public safe and do what is necessary. This bill cannot be passed. I am against it.</p>

SB20-217	Ashley	Averett	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am continuing from my previous submission as I did not have enough space. As a police officers wife, and have been for many many years, many of my friends, family, and co-workers are also in law enforcement. This bill has some OK aspects to it, but I feel like the biggest one that is really going to hurt the people who are here to serve and protect you is the amount they can be sued for with no financial help from the department, FOP, or union. That is not fair and I feel like it is unjust to ask that of people in this profession to do. Currently, an officer can be sued and the department and FOP help with the costs, why does that have to be changed? Currently, our family lives in a 1000sq ft house, pays \$2000 a month in mortgage, lives pay check to pay check and then having no means to help protect us against a law suite will completely bankrupt us. We would have to sell everything in order to fight legal fees and other things that come with this cost. It is unfair! Lawyers, real estate agents, doctors, bounty hunters are all allowed to have some sort of insurance, FOP or department coverage for legal representation and fees, why cant law enforcement? You are hurting the people who are out there daily trying to keep this world a better place. It is going to cause a lot of officers not to want to do their job because of fear of losing everything if they are sued. Please take this time and not be a politician, making 500,0000 a year in income and think what this is going to do to the majority of Colorado residents living pay check to pay check. Police officers do not get in this job because it makes good money, because it doesn't, they get in it to help YOU when YOU are in a time of crisis and need help, don't make their job harder than it already is.</p>
SB20-217	Brad	Scharmann	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am writing to voice my support for SB20-217 as a member of the community here in Denver. I believe the reforms brought about by this bill will be a step in the right direction towards restoring trust between this community and those we employ to bring peace and safety.</p> <p>We have all witnessed the events, pain, anger, frustration, passion, and activism of the past 3 weeks. It is hard not to realize that the current system of accountability for our police officers is unacceptable and insufficient. We know and must admit that the policies that have been in place until now have isolated and unfairly targeted the Black community. Intentional or not, we are all, as citizens, complicit in ignoring the cries of help from our people. This bill is, as stated above, a step in the right direction- a chance to begin to rectify our missteps and our ignorance.</p> <p>We owe it to ourselves as a community, as a city and as a state to look in the mirror and reflect on what we can do to make a positive impact for not just ourselves, but those of us who are underrepresented and unheard. This is an opportunity to set an example for the rest of the nation, and I will be proud of the Colorado state legislature, as well as all the citizens who've fought for this, when this bill is passed.</p>
SB20-217	Brenden	Hoglund	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am deeply disturbed at the idea and the spirit behind what this bill appears to represent.</p> <p>This bill began as a downright attack against law enforcement, not as an establishment, but as individuals. The original writing of this bill included the possibility to sue an individual for an amount (\$100,000) that would force them to most likely sell their homes or make it impossible to support their families. To make it even worse it included specific verbiage that the law enforcement officer could not protect themselves or their families with an insurance policy.</p> <p>I understand that we have some bad law enforcement officers in this world but this is not the majority. The majority are the people that you are going to call on when you need help the most. They are good, upstanding and well intentioned people who genuinely want to help people and want to improve the communities in which they work. They want to keep you safe as that is their job.</p> <p>I have had the privilege to work side by side with some of these men and women. I rely on them every time I go to work to help keep my safe while I do my job. I also have law enforcement personal in my family and the amount of anxiety and worry this bill has caused my family is unmeasurable and it makes me sick to my stomach.</p> <p>While I understand some amendments have been made to the original bill to limit some of the scope, the spirit of this bill still remains, in my eyes, as an unwarranted attack on our law enforcement officers.</p> <p>I encourage you, as our elected leaders, to support our law enforcement officers in their efforts to keep us safe. Do not spend time working towards legislation that will make them feel like they are being punished for the malicious actions of the few bad law enforcement personnel that are out there.</p> <p>Sincerely Brenden Hoglund</p>

SB20-217	Brier	Goldsmith	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Legislator,</p> <p>My husband works for the Denver Sheriff's Department. He works in the jail there in downtown Denver. He doesn't have time to see race, he sees good vs. evil and he only wants to protect the community from evil. He believes in second chances and works with the inmates in the jail to work towards becoming better and being a better contribution to society as a whole. My husband performs his job with the utmost pride and upholds the oath he took to be a Denver Sheriff's Deputy with honor and dignity. I feel law enforcement has been demonized so much by the media and by leaders and legislators across this country. I feel better about the amendments made in the Senate on the bill but, more need to be made. I will very supportive of more amendments being made. But, passing this bill as is is an insult to all the men and women in blue who took that oath, work hard every day to protect others knowing they may not go back home to their families, and are good, decent people. My husband saw the bad or wrongful doing of law enforcement growing up! He went into law enforcement to make a difference; to be that change! No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop. My kids love their daddy and we want him to come home to us EVERY day!</p> <p>Thank you, Brier Goldsmith</p>
SB20-217	Brittney	Jones	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear committee,</p> <p>My name is Brittney Jones and I oppose SB20-217.</p> <p>I remember the day my husband got his badge the glow and excitement in his eye was unforgettable. After continuously trying for 5 year he did it he had his dream career and was ready to make a difference in our community as a peace officer. The glow in his eyes has slowly faded as he has been on the job. The hate and disrespect he receives is disheartening, my husband has been called many names, has had things thrown at him for just trying to help. But he does not let that stop him he still wakes up everyday to go to work with a smile on his face. He leaves me and our sons every night to help those in need and to think we could loose everything we have because of a mistake scares me. We are a young family being sued would ruin us, as a one income family we do not have the funds to come back from something like that. My husband is not perfect, no human is but he is a good man and should not loose everything he has from a mistake he could possible make or by being labeled as a bad cop. This label has followed him and our family through our daily lives. My son started preschool last year and was beyond excited to have new kids to play with, as we were to excited to meet new people. Our son would tell everyone that his daddy is a police office. Seeing the smile on his face when told people would melt your heart. But unfortunately when people found out we were a LEO family they assume he is bad because is a cop and do not want to associate with us. Which then effects our son, we shouldn't have to explain why his friend from school will not come over to play because of my husband career. I find it shameful that we will have to tell our boys as they grow up that they can not tell people what their dad does for work, for the fear that people will lash out at them as they do us due to the way media portrays police officers. We should not have to hide when we are so proud of what he does and the difference he can make. We have lost many friends and family because of my husbands career choice, but we manage because it is something he loves and is passionate about doing.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Brittney Jones</p>
SB20-217	Caitlin	Winkler	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am strongly in favor of passing of SB20-217. Evidence suggests that passing regulations such as those outlined in SB20-217 will have a significant impact on decreasing police brutality, which disproportionately and adversely effects members of the black community. Nationally, black Americans are 2.5x more likely to be killed by police than white Americans, and police are almost 4x more likely to use force on black Americans than white Americans. In 2015 alone, unarmed black Americans were murdered by police at 5x the rate of unarmed white Americans (at least 104 black Americans were murdered by police in 2015, nearly twice each week), and police violence against black Americans has only increased since then. Globally, American police shoot, kill and imprison more people than other developed countries. As has been evident by the George Floyd protests, police departments across the country have been largely unchecked and their power unquestioned, at the cost of numerous innocent lives lost. Enough is enough. We need better laws that more thoroughly regulate our police departments, that will crack down on police brutality and hold those who are responsible for heinous actions accountable. We live in a country that was built to benefit white people while punishing black people, and we have to acknowledge that fact and move forward by tearing down and rebuilding our racist systems and institutions, including the police force. It is truly the least that we can do. For George Floyd. For Breonna Taylor. For Eric Garner. For Elijah McClain, who was murdered by police in Aurora, Colorado. For the countless other black Americans who have been murdered by our unchecked police force. We owe it to them and the entire black community, who has been the most hurt by our police force, the very institution that is supposed to serve and protect them and all Americans. We have to do better. Enough is enough.</p>

SB20-217	Caitlin	Grega	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I beg you to please take a moment to read this and pause. I greatly appreciate all of the concessions made to this point and encourage you to please read this to inform your decisions. Thank you for your time and realize that I acknowledge there are many good pieces to this bill and there are positive changes, with a few suggested changes.</p> <p>I can honestly say, this has been the scariest week of my husband's career for me and our family. He puts on his badge and walks out the door working overtime to handle the current environment. With all the hatred and demonizing, I have feared more for his life this week than I ever have before. Please know these are human beings who have families and who want to come home every night to their loved ones after protecting their communities too.</p> <p>You have written this in such a way that reads "guilty until proven innocent" which goes against everything America stands for. You are painting all officers as bad and that is not true! Understand, many of us support a great deal in this bill and encourage change, however, this cannot be finalized as currently written. Changes requested: Please remove the language around "presumptive nefarious activity" if a body cam is not turned on. I encourage you to change it to "purposefully does not turn on". This language needs to be adjusted to be fair and equitable for all parties involved. Also, I strongly encourage change around the qualified immunity.</p> <p>There are thousands of good men and women who put on the badge to protect each of us. I implore you to remember all the good they do, and not the few bad ones who should be punished for their poor actions. Since January 1, 20 officers have been killed in the line of duty trying to protect their communities. I feel very afraid that law enforcement is being demonized by the media and legislators across the country unfairly.</p> <p>Please consider the downstream impacts on what this will do to each of your local communities. If police stop doing their jobs, if they quit, who will you hire? The criminal behaviors will increase without anyone to stop them.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration. Please, Please do what is right for our communities. Take the time and reconsider this. This has moved too quickly. Caitlin Grega</p>
SB20-217	Carleigh	Baughman	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I am a proud police wife of an upstanding officer with the Colorado Springs Police Department, because of this you can imagine the conflicting emotions our family has experienced over the last several days. We hope to express the genuine outrage law enforcement officers and their families feel towards the murder of George Floyd. However, we hope that outrage would be conserved for the officers who committed that crime and not unjustly placed on law abiding, public servants like my husband and his brothers in blue. Daily, my husband and his colleagues leave their families as they protect the streets of Colorado Springs. Seeing unspeakable tragedies and placing their lives in danger for people they do not even know... these people whom they are protecting are the same people who have hurled horrendous insults, death threats and are fighting now to defund the police.</p> <p>Since the tragic death of George Floyd, I have heard threats against our family, been told people hope that my husband is killed, and have experience unjust accusations that my husband is a racist and a murder on no fault of his own, simply for wearing a badge. I fear to leave my house with my police supportive bumper sticker and hold my husband a little tighter fearing it may be the last time I hug him as this hatred may prevent him from returning home. I can assure you; my husband's heart beats for the community of Colorado Springs and he risks his life daily for the citizens of this city without any discrimination to race or otherwise. He is a good man behind his badge, and I would ask that as we fight against the generalization of racism that this bill would not be enacted to generalize our law enforcement officers. I believe wholly that this bill places the life of my husband and his brothers in blue in danger. The language of the bill ties the hands of cops as they do their job in the community and encourages unrest and revulsion towards cops which we have experienced personally.</p> <p>I would ask that this legislation be reconsidered, the language implying that there is a presumption of guilt on behalf of an officer if a bodycam is defective or accidentally off be removed, and that privacy for the officer and his family be implemented as we fear our family is in danger from the animosity encouraged to be shown towards police. Thank you for your generous consideration as we all work to make our community safe.</p>
SB20-217	Carole	Wellmann	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>As a Denver resident, I am horrified and saddened in the lack of police accountability from the Denver Police Department. I am prioritizing Denver and Colorado's wellbeing and asking to redirecting funding away from the police. They are pillar of violence and terror in our communities.</p> <p>I can no longer accept the empty statement of "reform". Colorado residents demand change. Although I am supporting SB20-217, I demand all representatives to drastically reduce the police budget and reinvest in a people's budget. The police force have shown consistently racist and abusive ways towards Colorado residents – especially black, indigenous and people of color communities.</p>
SB20-217	Carrie	Roberts	For	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Charleen	Ramirez-Mares	For	Self	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Cherry-Rose	Anderson	For	NAACP CO MT WY State Conference	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Christian	Heyne	For	Brady	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Christina	Cauley	Amend	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Christine	Painter	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>Hello, My name is Christine. I'm a wife of an amazing Police Officer. While I'm thankful for the amendments, I'm still afraid. Afraid for his life right now. I'm afraid of the ramifications of losing our house if he makes a simple mistake and forgets to turn on his camera, therefore implying it was nefarious activity that he doesn't want shown. (His department doesn't currently have body cams so that would be an adjustment.) I'm afraid for our daughter learning to drive with her permit- so we removed our thin blue line stickers off our vehicle she is practicing with, including a sticker for when Deputy Zack Parrish was murdered. I'm afraid for all the other GOOD brothers and sisters in Blue that decide to LEAVE Colorado because of this bill. Have you ever called 911 and no one answered your call for service? I sure hope we don't come to that. And lastly, I want to tell you about the dinner conversation we had last night with our four children. We had the talk of "It's not IF Daddy will get hurt but WHEN." I beg of you, please review every word, & amendment in this bill to fit if you were talking about your own spouse, son or daughter, brother or sister, etc wearing that badge. Because I KNOW you all know a GOOD cop that this will affect, along with their family and the community in Colorado that is counting on them to show up when no one else will. Thank you,</p> <p>Christine P.</p>
SB20-217	Citlali	Mares	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee,</p> <p>I am writing in support of SB20-217. As a person of color I am scared for any interactions that I may have with police. I shouldn't be afraid to make one wrong move and have my life on the line. I want the police department to be held accountable for irresponsible and immature actions. As a sixteen year old I shouldn't be worried about if I'm gonna have to bury my friends because of interactions with the police.</p> <p>Thank You,</p> <p>Citlali Mares</p>
SB20-217	Cobea	Becker	For	Colorado Juvenile Defender Center	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Cole	Chaloupka	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>My name is Cole Chaloupka, and I am in favor of bill number SB20-217.</p> <p>This bill is just the beginning in a large number of changes that must be met to hold law enforcement accountable for their actions. Getting rid of the 'qualified immunity' loophole is a high leverage reform effort in ensuring that this accountability begins.</p> <p>I hope that, as police reform begins, Colorado begins to look introspectively at how to end systemic injustice and racist policy that plague communities of color. There is precedent for this change. Camden, New Jersey began reform efforts in 2013 as a response to its soaring murder rates and high number of excessive force complaints (NPR, 'Former Chief Of Reformed Camden, N.J., Force: Police Need 'Consent Of The People'). Scott Thomson, then police chief of Camden, decided to take this introspective look from a policy perspective. While the officers were fired during the overhaul of the department, many were re-hired after committing to an intensive re-application process, that included psychological evaluations. Homicides went from "67 in 2012 to 25 in 2019." This exemplifies the idea that police training is more effective when it's proactive and community based, and not similar to "joining a paramilitary organization," as is the standard in the academy (Brooks, Stop Training Police Like They're Joining the Military).</p> <p>There are many valuable nuggets from former cops in what changes need to be made-- Thomson says that the "police is only effective if it has the consent of the people" and in serving the people, police need to "get to know their community." Additionally, there have been sentiments from retired police officers, including Thomson, who have claimed the most valuable policing they have ever done is referring individuals to community resources and local nonprofits. One former police officer (who stayed anonymous) wrote that he did not need a gun and other "sweeping police powers" to assist the community-- rather "when [he] was doing [his] best work as a cop, [he] was doing mediocre work as a therapist or a social worker" (Confessions of a Former Bastard Cop).</p> <p>Our nation, and the communities within our nation, will only thrive when the values of community, equity, and reform are at the forefront of our minds. Policing is a great place to start the overhaul.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
SB20-217	Crystal	Beattie	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Police Brutality has slid under the radar and been swept under the rug for far too long. How can we respect our Men and Women in Blue if we can trust them and only fear them? They must be held accountable for their actions equally as we would be. They are not above the Law and swore to uphold it.. well so many are making headlines for the opposite. Change is necessary.</p>

SB20-217	Dana	Lindenberg	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Daniel	Dobrick	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>SB-217 is a great START to handling policing differently in this state and I'm in full support of it passing in it's current state without amendment and if there needs to be amendments, I really hope they only make the bill stronger and not weaken any of the language it contains. Our communities should not live in fear of the officials who are meant to serve and protect us; defend this bill and ensure it passes intact. We must end qualified immunity, which has shielded officers from accountability and denied families justice.</p> <p>I support police accountability because police NEED to be held accountable to the people they serve and too often police use their power to harm Black & Brown people then simply keep their jobs and continue their lives while Black & Brown families are left to mourn the loss of their loved ones.</p>
SB20-217	Danielle	Conyers	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED.</p> <p>It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters.</p> <p>Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. Just because they are members of law enforcement does not mean that they are above the law.</p> <p>This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY.</p> <p>This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Danielle	Copello	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Two years ago we moved across the country for better education for our 2 kids, one of whom has Down Syndrome, and for a better work opportunity for my husband. He has been in law enforcement for 14 years and has a degree in criminal justice. He has worked tirelessly over the years to serve everyone in the community and to improve himself in every way he can. Since we read the first draft of this bill, we have been terrified. Terrified because if the bill passes that would mean his life's work would be ended in a matter of weeks. It might mean moving our kids again to a new place. What happened to George Floyd was tragic and should never have happened. That officer should be punished to the full extent of the law. There are bad Officers but I truly believe there are far more good ones than bad. My husband is one of them. We always get compliments on our kids behavior, their kindness and inclusion ever present. That is because of what we have taught them. They treat everyone with respect. Our son is hugely proud of his dad, he values his work ethic and drive to be better, to serve the community at his best. I can't even imagine if his career ended suddenly because some felt the need to punish every good officer for the mistakes of a few. I understand why they are bringing this bill forward but it is a rushed bill pushed by emotion more than anything. I'm asking that you vote no on this bill and as that emotion continues to be present to use it constructively to make way for change, to take the appropriate amount of time to think about a bill of this magnitude. Our lives would be forever changed by this and we would have to leave behind a place that has become home.</p>

SB20-217	David	Shuck	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to you in support of SB-217, the Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity Act. I am a nearly lifelong Coloradan and for the past couple years I've been involved as a volunteer in the effort to make our criminal justice system more equitable, less harmful, and less expensive for our community. I've observed thousands of arraignments all across our state, canvassed hundreds of doors, read countless inmate letters, written legal memos, given public testimony, and I am beyond thrilled to see a bill like SB-217 proposed.</p> <p>I support every aspect of the bill but I would like to use my time advocating specifically for the measure that ends Qualified Immunity. Qualified Immunity means that police officers cannot be held civilly liable for their own misconduct. Instead, we as taxpayers foot the bill, making us all complicit in the actions of unethical and abusive public employees.</p> <p>A few examples from Susan Greene in the Colorado Independent: "In 2015, Denver approved a \$50,000 settlement in the case of Patricia Lucero, who was slammed into a wall by a police officer. A month earlier, the city settled with James Moore, who was beaten by another officer, for \$860,000. In 2014, Denver reached a \$3.25 million settlement with Jamal Hunter in exchange for his agreement not to disclose details of a jail...In 2013, the city paid \$360,000 to four women who were roughed up by police at the Denver Diner. In 2011, Alex Landau, whom police pulled from a car and beat after he made an illegal left turn, won a \$795,000 settlement."</p> <p>Our courts ruled that the officers involved in these 5 incidents caused over \$5 million in harm to our fellow citizens, and yet, none were prosecuted or lost their jobs. Some are still working in Colorado law enforcement.</p> <p>If our police departments will not fire them, and our district attorneys will not prosecute them, ending Qualified Immunity would at least make abusive police liable for their actions in our civil courts. I'm sure you would appreciate an extra \$5 million, which could fund more teachers, infrastructure, drug counseling, homeless services, or any other public goods. But this is also about far more than taxpayer dollars. Making police personally liable would make them reconsider every unlawful chokehold, baton strike, or bullet fired as something they would have to pay for. Such a system could weed out the most abusive officers who would be "too expensive" (i.e. too violent) to keep on the force.</p> <p>I encourage you to vote yes on SB-217.</p>
SB20-217	Debbie	Hendrixson	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>First, I feel as though Law Enforcement has been demonized in the eye of the public by false and inaccurate information, labeling and the very minimal amount of information, by the media and by our leaders and legislators across the country. No one hates a bad cop more than the good ones. Where is the media's accountability? Many innocent police officers are dying from this and instead of them being protected, they are being shamed and treated like criminals. I believe you should take the time to speak to police officers about numerous scenarios and how this bill would affect their being ability to do their job and protect their community, and help to find common ground to better the public? Or try to find out what it's like out there for them even before this happened, so you have a better idea how to help all parties? It's easy to judge when you do not walk in their footsteps. My husband has served his country in the military and has been with law enforcement for 25 years. Everyday my children have to say goodbye to their dad and watch him leave to go protect people he doesn't even know. As a family, we went through a horrific time when my husband was shot. And as hard as it was for us, he went back. He keeps going back. He would stand in front of a stranger to protect them from a bullet. We now have to not only fear the public, the hatred, the harassment and threats, we have to fear our government not having our backs as well. I feel better about the amendments that have been made but there are so many more that need to be made. For one, the language that implies there is a presumption that if a body camera isn't on, that there was nefarious activity the officer didn't want to show, needs work. I would also be supportive of amendments that continue to protect the privacy of those who would be filmed on the body camera. If you take the time, slow this bill down and seek input from the very professionals that protect you, I believe better solutions can be found. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Destinee	Perkins	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee,</p> <p>I am writing today to plead with you to support the SB20-217 bill. My black son is just 11 years old and already towers over me. As he inches closer to becoming a teenager, I become more and more afraid about the times I won't be with him. I can't help but become paralyzed by the thought that he will be only be seen as a threat by the police - seen for only his blackness and not the kind and loving son and best big brother to four sisters that he is. When I read stories like Elijah Jovan McClain's, I see my son Jovan and I can't breathe. We deserve better, we deserve justice, we deserve peace.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns.</p> <p>Destinee Perkins</p>
SB20-217	Elisabeth	Rosen	For	CO Bar Association	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Elizabeth	Shaw	For	Self	Submitted text	Please vote to support SB20-217. Our communities should not live in fear of the officials who are meant to serve and protect us. Defend this bill and ensure it passes intact. We must end qualified immunity, which has shielded officers from accountability and denied families justice. I support police accountability because overwhelmingly across the country we see gross abuses of power by those meant to serve and protect, and violence and policing perpetrated disproportionately against communities of color. The violence has to end, and increasing the accountability of law enforcement (especially by ending qualified immunity) to ALL communities and redirecting funds to community-based housing and mental health resources and education represent the bare minimum necessary. Protect BIPOC by passing this bill INTACT.
SB20-217	Emily	Hessler	For	Self	Submitted text	I write to urge you to support SB20-217 without amendment. As an attorney, I am all too familiar with the doctrine of qualified immunity and have seen too many cases in which officers are not held accountable for violating citizens' constitutional rights because the law was not "clearly established." Coloradans should be entitled to have their day in court--and get relief--if the officials meant to serve and protect violate the law. I therefore urge in particular support for the provision ending the defense of qualified immunity in Colorado. The bill as is contains much-needed and long-overdue reforms that will promote greater law enforcement transparency, accountability, and integrity. Please vote in favor.
SB20-217	Emilyn	Winkelmeyer	For	Self	Submitted text	This is my first time testifying in support of a bill, albeit remotely. I urge you to support SB20-217. Coloradoans, particularly Black Coloradoans, should not have to fear the police-the officials meant to protect and serve us. Yet, the police have behaved in ways that make that fear the only rational response. It should not have taken so many deaths, so many police murders, for this bill to appear before you. I urge you to support SB20-217 intact and as is. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be further weakened. It is imperative that we hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force. I also urge you not to permit the body camera footage provisions to be weakened either. In particular, I support retaining 24-31-902(1)(a)(III) as written. Though some prosecutions may be impacted by this language, which reasonably creates a presumption of misconduct and a presumption against admissibility of any statements obtained while the camera was off, the current language does not foreclose the admission of the statements. It simply requires the prosecution to overcome this presumption. This is a reasonable hurdle that the State should face if the State fails to keep their cameras rolling. The language as-is recognizes that officers must be incentivized to keep their cameras rolling. The language as-is recognizes that there are well-documented instances when the police have turned off their cameras when it was beneficial to them. The language as-is recognizes that there are well-documented instances when the police have coerced statements from the accused. The language as-is thus recognizes and protects citizens' Fifth Amendment rights by ensuring that the police must keep their cameras rolling and abstain from coercive conduct when questioning the accused. The language as-is thus creates incentives which protect foundational principles of our criminal justice system, such as the right to due process and the right to a fair trial. Thus, I urge you to reject any proposals to weaken this language, which properly strikes the balance between policing the police, our desire to prosecute crimes, and the rights of our citizenry. If we cannot trust the police to keep their cameras rolling to protect prosecutions, how can we trust what they claim they heard, said, and did when they have turned their cameras off? Thank you for your work in representing our community.
SB20-217	Esmeralda	Ziegelmann	Amend	Self	Submitted text	Hello my name is Esmeralda Ziegelmann and I am a significant other of a LEO. My "Husband" like most of the other LEO's I know work hard everyday and give everything they have to this profession. Time away from their families, blood, sweat, tears. Not knowing if they will make it home to their loved ones at the end of their 10 hr shifts. This bill has come at a time where emotions are high and we want to reform and perhaps this is what is needed in many ways. But to do so we must do it across the board. We must not only protect those this bill is intended to protect but our officers that go out there and put their lives in harms way to protect those that stand against them today. The amendments that are in place already have placed us more at ease but we still believe there can be more put in place to protect everyone. When one bad cop does something, all cops pay for it and believe me when I say no one dislikes a bad cop more than a good cop. Because it breaks everything down that they have tried to do and gain within their communities. Its disheartening. Please don't punish all the good ones for what the few bad ones out there have done. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Esmeralda	Ziegelmann	Amend	Self	Submitted text	Hello my name is Esmeralda Ziegelmann and I am a significant other of a LEO. My "Husband" like most of the other LEO's I know work hard everyday and give everything they have to this profession. Time away from their families, blood, sweat, tears. Not knowing if they will make it home to their loved ones at the end of their 10 hr shifts. This bill has come at a time where emotions are high and we want to reform and perhaps this is what is needed in many ways. But to do so we must do it across the board. We must not only protect those this bill is intended to protect but our officers that go out there and put their lives in harms way to protect those that stand against them today. The amendments that are in place already have placed us more at ease but we still believe there can be more put in place to protect everyone. When one bad cop does something, all cops pay for it and believe me when I say no one dislikes a bad cop more than a good cop. Because it breaks everything down that they have tried to do and gain within their communities. Its disheartening. Please don't punish all the good ones for what the few bad ones out there have done. Thank you for your time.

SB20-217	Esmeralda	Ziegelmann	Amend	Self	Submitted text	Hello my name is Esmeralda Ziegelmann and I am a significant other of a LEO. My "Husband" like most of the other LEO's I know work hard everyday and give everything they have to this profession. Time away from their families, blood, sweat, tears. Not knowing if they will make it home to their loved ones at the end of their 10 hr shifts. This bill has come at a time where emotions are high and we want to reform and perhaps this is what is needed in many ways. But to do so we must do it across the board. We must not only protect those this bill is intended to protect but our officers that go out there and put their lives in harms way to protect those that stand against them today. The amendments that are in place already have placed us more at ease but we still believe there can be more put in place to protect everyone. When one bad cop does something, all cops pay for it and believe me when I say no one dislikes a bad cop more than a good cop. Because it breaks everything down that they have tried to do and gain within their communities. Its disheartening. Please don't punish all the good ones for what the few bad ones out there have done. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Fay	Rebuelta	For	Self	Submitted text	Yes, I am in favor of SB20-217.
SB20-217	Fay	Rebuelta	For	Self	Submitted text	Yes I am in favor of SB20-217.
SB20-217	Gillian	Grant	For	Self	Submitted text	This is a small step in holding officers accountable for their actions while we think critically about how our police system needs to change.
SB20-217	Haley	Rank	For	Self	Submitted text	Please see uploaded letter and additionally. Police officers often escape liability because of qualified immunity, a legal doctrine that prevents the community from holding police responsible when they violate laws, policies, and community trust. Police officers are government officials who should be held accountable to the people they serve.
SB20-217	Heather	Bowler	For	Self	Submitted text	The House is strongly urged to pass SB20-217. Law enforcement must be held completely accountable for their actions. And specifically, abolishing qualified immunity for police will bring the accountability and transparency that could be a step toward all citizens, regardless of race, being served by officers of the law.
SB20-217	Indra	Lusero	For	Elephant Circle	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Jackson	Matthews	For	Self	Uploaded file	Good morning, in regards to this bill, I urge that the colorado legislature votes YES, and passes this bill. It has been made clear that the use of police force in the state of Colorado needs to be changed. In the case of the recent protests, it was apparent that peace officers were targeting peaceful individuals indiscriminately, and using excessive force in manners that turned less-then lethal weapons into lethal, and permanently damaging weapons. This needs to change, and any peace officer guilty of this use of force needs to be held accountable. This can happen if you vote YES on SB20-217. Not only in times of conflict, will this help maintain accountability and peace, but it will enforce justice in cases all over the state when a peace officer is questioned on their conduct when handling arrests or when using force of any kind in our state. This change needs to happen. Vote YES on SB20-217.
SB20-217	Jacob	Bloom	For	Self	Submitted text	Friends of mine have been attacked and injured by the police in recent weeks; a friend was shot in the head with a sponge bullet and nearly lost sight in one eye. I support this bill because it implements some great steps to try to prevent this kind of injustice in the future, and because it represents a powerful step forward in dismantling the brutal system that has kept black people and other POC down for the entirety of our nation's history.

SB20-217	Jacob	Stock	For	Self	Uploaded file	<p>Hello, my name is Jacob Stock and I'm currently a student at University of Colorado at Boulder. I am in firm affirmation of this bill for three major reasons. First, I believe that recent events have proved that our current legislation surrounding law enforcement is not comprehensive enough. This is shown by the clear First Amendment infringement demonstrated by the use of tear gas and foam bullets against peaceful protesters and reporters in Denver most notably on May 29th and 30th. Secondly, my personal experiences in these protests have made clear to me the excessive force currently being used by police and the effect on civilians' health, both mental and physical. Lastly, the clear systemic racism and targeting of people of color by law enforcement have exhibited the need for additional accountability measures for law enforcement.</p> <p>First, the First Amendment in the United States of America's constitution clearly states that "Congress shall make no law...prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble." Our current system of law enforcement holds officers unaccountable on their infringement of this amendment. Reporters have been shot at with foam bullets and gassed alongside peaceful protesters with law enforcement's justification often being that an empty water bottle was thrown at them or that someone in the crowd was being violent (of which there are numerous accounts where agitators' identities are found to be those working in law enforcement). The people of the Black Lives Matter movement are owed their constitutional right to assemble without fear of retribution from local law enforcement, especially with such excessive force. The physical and legal offense against reporters covering the protests is also a clear infringement of the First Amendment, only further clarifying for us the excessive force used in that local law enforcement does not want the violence against protesters to be publicized.</p> <p>Secondly, my own personal experience has dictated to me that the action's of local law enforcement during the protests have been detrimental to the physical and mental health of civilians. Walking in the protests for the first time on the 31st, I was shocked and honestly terrified when protesters felt the need to begin chanting "Hands up! Don't shoot!" as we walked by a brigade of police officers. I immediately reached for my safety goggles and saline solution, ready to aid any protesters who were hurt, I then realized that the protesters remained peaceful. However, the fact that these protesters, now including myself, have become desensitized to the threat of law enforcement and have become conditioned to perform the equivalent of raising a white flag anytime they walk past law enforcement. This coupled with the severe injuries these foam bullets caused in people all across the nation as well as in Denver are very telling as to the threat that this seemingly unregulated law enforcement poses to protesters and everyday citizens.</p> <p>Finally, the clear systemic racism and targeting of people of color by local law enforcement with their current regulations are detrimental to the survival and propagation of these communities and thus law enforcement must be held accountable for these violations of so many people's civil liberties. We have tried to keep the same power in law enforcement and combat this bias with racial bias training and other methods aimed at eliminating racism within law enforcement. However, these trainings have not stopped this phenomenon and thus law enforcement's power must be reduced and they must be held accountable for their crimes. The fact that George Floyd's murderer had been previously written up for racial bias an excessive use of force but was still on their local law enforcement is telling that the police are not being held accountable and it is leading to further loss of the lives of people of color.</p> <p>In conclusion, I am in firm affirmation of this bill for three major reasons. First, the current force being used to harm protesters and reporters is a clear infringement of the First Amendment and thus, officers must be held accountable. Second, the current psychological, physiological, and chemical warfare being used in protests is extremely detrimental to the wellbeing of citizens. Lastly, this institution has been long known for racial bias and their targeting of people of color, and thus in order to protect these communities, local law enforcement must be held accountable.</p>
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SB20-217	James	Zorich	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217 *as-introduced*. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>I urge you to support the bill as introduced and allow it to remain intact. Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the language regarding statements that are not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from "prosecution related to the incident" to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration and for your work representing your constituents in Colorado.</p>
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SB20-217	James	Hardy	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Jamie	Merrion	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Jasper	LaFortune	For	Self	Submitted text	I am voicing my support of SB 217. Ending qualified immunity is just the first step in ending the police's reign of terror on communities of color in Colorado, but it is a necessary one that can have a real and important impact today.
SB20-217	Jaymie	Ownbey	Amend	Self	Submitted text	Five generations of police and military service. This is the legacy of my husband's family. Protect and serve is all my husband knows. I've watched my husband lose God during his 3 tours in Iraq after 9-11. He rebuilt and he healed with each baby he's saved from abuse, every drug siezure he's made to save countless overdoses, each suicide he's prevented, and each family he's handed money to when they've needed it. He's not what is broken in this country nor are our children who say they want to follow in his stead. He is the very best of America and so are the majority of our law enforcement officers. I ask that you remember that persecution of any demographic for any reason remains persecution. Passing legislation that assumes guilt of good officers whose camera breaks or takes victim's privacy away only promises to create more victims, more resentment, more hate. I hold you accountable today, much like you hold these men and women accountable, to justly do your jobs. In the hours and days ahead I implore you to do what is right not just for any one group but for ALL of those you are here to represent. Help families like mine who want to see our loved one be able to hold their heads high again with pride and certainty knowing that they honorably hold that thin blue line.

SB20-217	Jeanne	Segil	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Jeanne	Segil	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Jeffrey	Wermer	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB 20-217 as is. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down further. Police officers must be held accountable for their use of excessive force or unjustified violence. The language as-is incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn-off their body cameras at a whim. Without this language, officers will continue to to turn their body cameras on and off to suit their purposes.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>

SB20-217	Jennifer	White	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>The majority of law enforcement personnel are not racist, they are not committing crimes against anyone. The actions of some are not representative of the profession, just as those who have been accused or found to be corrupt in government are not representative of your profession as a whole. I feel that by removing this protection for officers who act in good faith will drive many good officers from the field because they cannot afford the potential personal cost of this bill. I believe that it will have a negative effect on their families as well as the community. While I cannot pretend to know everything there is to know about this bill, I do not believe it means taking away qualified immunity from officers who are doing the right thing, that are acting within the law. Especially when Law Enforcement Officers are the only citizen's of the United States that are subjected to double jeopardy as they can be tried for the same charges separately on a state and federal level. They are already subject to more oversight and potential repercussions for their actions than any other citizen of this country. Are there any of you subject to such scrutiny?</p> <p>Please reconsider what you are asking, slow down, think of the short and long term impacts on the community, and all families in both the consideration of removing qualified immunity. These issues should be given deep thought and intentional action and not a knee jerk reaction that has lasting repercussions for the entire community as well as for the future of the community. Thank you for taking the time to listen to this testimony and I pray that you do the right thing for my family and yours.</p>
SB20-217	Jennifer	Curtin	For	Self	Submitted text	This bill MUST be passed. It is beyond time to protect our communities, particularly our black and brown communities, from law enforcement's overreach and abuse of power.
SB20-217	Jeramie	Lund	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I choose to serve the community and protect the North Metro Denver city I work for. I go to work with it in the back of my mind that I could make the ultimate sacrifice, that I could give my life so justice can be kept.</p> <p>Without the personal liability amendment of this bill, I will go to work with the fear that my loved ones can endure another sacrifice; my loved ones could have their home and life savings taken away because I choose to protect and serve.</p> <p>If this amendment is not kept, there is a great risk to the community. The police officers would hesitate on the job. Police officers need to know the Colorado State Law and know what to do to keep the peace, while adhering to the law. The bill gives the opportunity for police officers to make mistakes and potentially more lives as they hesitate and question if their action is worth a potential law suit, which would leave their family on the street.</p> <p>My daughter doesn't need to fear I may not come home AND she might loose her home because I choose to keep the peace.</p>
SB20-217	Jesi	Jones	For	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Jessica	McElroy	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>My husband signed up for law enforcement to be a HELPER. He is a good man. Please consider the consequences of this bill on his confidence to do the job and the safety of his wife and children. We are extremely appreciative of the amendments being made and the people fighting for the Blue Family. But the ramifications our family could face if my husband made a mistake at work, because of this bill, are absolutely terrifying. PLEASE remember that GOOD men and women voluntarily sign up to sacrifice so much to protect the community. Children see the police as heroes. Please do not take away the safety, security, help, and resources that so many citizens need from law enforcement. And please do not put the safety of other professionals (mental health, social workers, fire fighters, paramedics, etc) at risk because you've taken responsibilities away from police officers that are crucial. Please STOP demonizing police when the majority of them are good, honest, hardworking, respectable HELPERS. Please make it safe for myself and my children to be out in public representing the Thin Blue Line, rather than living discreetly because of FEAR. Please protect the victims of crime rather than publicize their trauma via video for anyone to see.</p> <p>My husband is a good man. Please protect those who are protecting YOU and YOUR COMMUNITY. Do not be the boy who cried wolf.</p>
SB20-217	Jessica	McKnight	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I wanted to first introduce myself. I am the wife of a police officer. Let me tell you about him!!!</p> <p>He has been an officer for 8 years with arapahoe county. He is also on the wild land firefighting team, defensive tactics instructor and a mental health first aid instructor. This amazing man in uniform, also loves his work with special olympics! In 2019 summer games, there was a little girl with down syndrome who was suddenly scared to get into the pool for her competition. So my husband in good fashion, took off his duty belt and jumped in with her and swam the length of the pool cheering her on as she completed her race! She was so excited that police Mike was there and then gave her a medal.</p> <p>This is one of the faces and stories of the good officers in our beautiful state. I want to say thank you for making the changes to this bill so it not only brings progress and change but also continues to respect and keep our officers safe. Please keep these in mind as you continue to make amendments. My husband is a good officer, please dont let those bad apples ruin the many good ones. Remember to have their back as they will always have yours.</p>

SB20-217	Jessica	McKnight	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I want to start by saying thank you for considering the first round of amendments, I appreciate you hearing our concerns.</p> <p>Over the last week our family however has been rocked to its core. My husband, an amazing cop, with more integrity than most people have in their entire body, risked his life to allow protestors to meet peacefully. Until, rocks were thrown at him, frozen water bottles, and other projectiles. My husband, who takes time out of every day to make sure someone smiles, who volunteers more of his time with special olympics of colorado in and out of uniform than with his family, is also a wildland firefighter, was being told he was the cause of all of the problems, was a racist, told to die, told he was going to be murdered as well as his family, just by being there and trying to protect himself, the community, and come home to his family safely. My children cried that they missed their daddy and wanted to know when he was coming home. As a mother, I didn't want to lie to them so I told them, I don't know. Not that I only didn't know what time he was coming home, but that I didn't know if he was coming back. Everytime he left, I studied his face in case he didn't come back. It breaks my heart that law enforcement has been demonized by the media, our states leaders and legislators. Please consider removing the language that implies there is a presumption that if a body camera isnt on that there was nefarious activity that the officers didn't want shown. It goes back to implying that all cops are bad, and I know first hand that there are good men and women that do their job and love this community day in and day out. I am supportive of amendments that continue to protect the privacy of those who would be filmed on those body worn cameras. We need to make sure that the good cops are supported. Remember his story. Put yourself in his shoes or mine for a moment while making these choices. These men and women need to have support while we make the proper reforms to this bill or we will let the criminals win. Police shield the community for the ugliness in the world and head towards that theater shooting or school shooting. Our police are here to serve us, we need to make sure they are respected and supported. Thank you for doing that with the first round of amendments.</p>
SB20-217	Jessica	Morgan	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,</p> <p>We are writing to urge you to support SB20-217, "Concerning Measures to Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity."</p> <p>This reasonable legislation is an important step in guaranteeing that the constitutional and civil rights of all Coloradans are protected during encounters with peace officers.</p> <p>We have been horrified to see innocent Colorado civilians, like Elijah McClain, killed by police officers who have not been held responsible for their deadly actions. There has been no justice for the families who have lost a beloved child, spouse, or parent.</p> <p>We believe that this legislation will ensure officer and department accountability through the reporting requirements, compulsory body cameras, restrictions on no-knock raids, the elimination of deadly and unnecessary practices like chokeholds, and removal of immunity in cases where a police officer has violated the law in order to ensure all Coloradans can have safe interactions with the police.</p> <p>Police should not be above the law. Rather, they should instead serve as law-abiding examples. If it is true, as many say, that there are only a few "bad apples" in law enforcement, then a bill like SB20-217 will effectively weed out the bad actors to ensure that those who wear a badge are truly worth public valorization.</p> <p>No Coloradan should ever be afraid of being killed by the police because they are simply listening to music, sitting in their own homes watching a movie, or driving with a broken taillight. Routine interactions with the police should not be a matter of life and death.</p> <p>As a white woman and man, we have never been afraid of encounters with the police or pulled over without just cause, but each of our Black friends and family members have continually received far different treatment due to the color of their skin. We should be better than this; SB20-217 provides us with a path to BE better and meet the promise of this incredible state and country.</p> <p>This bill is the product of much negotiation and has seen strong bipartisan support in the Senate. Please save lives by supporting SB20-217.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
SB20-217	Jessica Ann	Rayburn	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Please vote in support of this bill. For too many years black, indigenous, and people of color have been the primary victims of police brutality. In your heart you know this is wrong. This bill is in response to the unprecedented level of police brutality in the US and Denver, however it is developed to protect ALL citizens. Please, please, please vote in favor of this bill. Please be the change the public needs and wants. Please live up to the ideals that brought you into politics. This land is our land together and the freedoms I as a white woman occupy in this country and state should be for every single citizen.</p>
SB20-217	John	Seward	For	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	John	Messner	For	Counties & Commissioners Acting Together (CCAT)	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Jonathan	Cappelli	For	Neighborhood Development Collaborative	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Joseline	Armendariz	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee,</p> <p>My name is Joseline Armendariz, I'm 16 years old and I from Denver and my parents are immigrants. I am a Girls Inc. of Metro Denver girl concerned about community safety. I have been seeing so much injustice against people of color and I want better for my family and my community.</p> <p>I have witnessed police treating people of color really badly. I have witnessed them taking advantage of people of color and pulling them over for no reason. Police need to be fair, be the leaders, and be a good example. My sister always wanted to be a police officer but what has stopped her is racial discrimination. I would like police to do their job better so that we can have a safer community.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217. It's so important for the law to follow their own law. They need to be leaders by example. SB20-217 is a way to make sure they follow their own rules.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Joseline</p>
SB20-217	Joseph	Suyeishi	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Joshua	Lemuel	For	Self	Uploaded file	<p>State Representatives,</p> <p>I believe you should pass SB20-217 because many lives have been taken at the hands of untrained law enforcement and racial profiling. My oldest brother Deramus Lemuel was young, gifted, talented -- and very well loved. His life was also taken by law enforcement. I hope no other family will have to go through what we've gone through.</p> <p>So I urge you to support this bill for justice for all.</p> <p>Joshua Lemuel Younger Brother of Deramus Lemuel Colorado Springs, CO</p>

SB20-217	Joyce	Akhahenda	For	Self	Submitted text	George Floyd’s death has called attention to the fact that for too long African-Americans have been murdered at the hands of the police without accountability. It is time that we enact legislation that will end the senseless murder of African-Americans and other minority men, women, boys and girls. I am asking you to support SB 20-217 in whole without watering down any of the provisions. As a finance committee, I am sure that you are concerned about money and the end to the assaults and murder of our community members will decrease the amount of money that cities have to pay in lawsuits. That money can be better used in community investment. The change in the use of force statute will stop senseless deaths from false reports that someone has a gun. Often in these cases, officers will say they thought someone had a gun when no gun is found. Changing the statute will help save lives. There should be an end to qualified immunity and we should hold police officers personally accountable. Good police officers have nothing to fear, it is only the bad ones who should be concerned. And that fear will help deter negative behavior. In my legal practice, all too often, police officers purposely turn off their BWC in interactions when it is convenient and beneficial for them because in reality there are no repercussions when that happens. Their word is believed, evidence is not suppressed, they get away with assaulting members of the community and their behavior is never reported. This happens time after time. This statute is a good first step in police reform and I am asking you to support it in whole.
SB20-217	Julie	Petek	Against	Self	Submitted text	My husband is and has been a well respected police officer in Colorado for 17 years. Prior to that he was military police. I am against this bill passing because it really demonstrates our lack of support for our police officers. They already have a stressful job, they already have rules and regulations to follow. This bill is reactionary to what happened to George Floyd. The officers in Colorado were not involved in this and yet have a bill created in reaction to George Floyd’s death. This has every police family I know very angry. If Colorado chooses not to support their officers and signs this into law, they will certainly lose a lot of officers. The officers will leave not for fear of being sued, for the sheer fact of more bureaucracy. This will open a whole mess of time, money, expenses for the state and cities involved.
SB20-217	Julie	Reiskin	For	Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Julietta	Dasilva	For	Self	Submitted text	#BLM
SB20-217	Kaleigh	Ritter	Amend	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Karen	Harlow	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am writing to let you know I feel this bill is being run through in haste. I know we have had racial problems for many years in history, among many other hateful issues. There has been plenty of time to come up with a fair and just system before we came to the George Floyd incident.</p> <p>I believe most police officers are upstanding and loyal in their positions. I know several officers and they are all appalled at what happened in Minnesota. We need to keep the officers we have, but let’s make sure we are training them properly. They need to go into many situations feeling confident and secure. If they go in feeling threatened, that will not be good for anyone. I also believe we will not be able to recruit new officers if they are threatened with lawsuits going into the job.</p> <p>As a citizen, I want to know I am protected. I want to know my neighbors, of every race, creed, and sexual preference are protected. We can do better, but I do not believe this bill is the answer. I agree Use of Force needs to be addressed, but how about we let the people who know how Use of Force actually works come up with better policies.</p> <p>I am not saying we do not need changes. I am saying let’s get a good solid community together to think this through and come up with better legislation that is not going to be contested in the courts later. Let’s put an end date on it, so we know it has to be addressed – No procrastinating until another incident happens.</p> <p>I hope you will consider approaching reform in a more thought-out manner and are able to do it soon.</p>
SB20-217	Karla	Gonzales Garci	For	Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Kate	Huff	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>My name is Kate Huff and thank you for hearing my thoughts on SB20-217. I am a proud democrat who has always wanted to see change in America. BLM is a powerful protest that has finally shown the world racial profiling is real. I am a school teacher who has taught Title 1 for 18 years. I know first hand how real racial profiling is. My husband has been a proud LEO for 10 years now. We moved to Colorado from Arizona because we knew this state was progressive and wanted change.</p> <p>My husband put his life on the line every night when he goes to his graveyard shift. My two children kiss him goodnight and tell him to be safe. My husband is the most patient and caring human being and we know he will protect Colorado’s citizens with absolute respect. It is not fair that amazing police like him are being profiled as bad because of officers who should not be on the job. I am so proud to have my husband as an LEO, however, we have been fearful for our safety. I had to removed my sticker off my car that shows I “back the blue” and take down any picture on social media of him in uniform due to the fact we were warned the media and others are taking those images and targeting families. This has been a nightmare and my husband is being punished for something he didn’t do. Just as there are unprofessional police, the same can go in any profession, but it’s not fair to chastise the entire force. Education, medical, political, religious, government...the list can go on...has people who should NOT be in the profession, but why should we all be punished for their actions? The answer is, we shouldn’t.</p> <p>I am pleading with you to please keep the amendments on this bill so that Colorado can keep it’s amazing officers. Without the ability to buy insurance, all of your good officers would be gone. Whether its moving to another state or finding new professions. I thank you for allowing us to purchase insurance and making the fine \$25k instead of \$100k. This allows my husband to continue being a sergeant for the force and keeping Colorado safe. Many families I spoke to had already begun looking at other states to move to before this amendment, so be keeping it intact, you WILL keep amazing officers here.</p> <p>Thank you for listening. We truly appreciate what you are doing to keep Coloradans safe, and by now amending the bill, keeping its LEOs safe and confident in their work to mend the divide that crooked officers have made for their name.</p> <p>Sincerely, Kate Huff Arvada</p>
SB20-217	Kate	West	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>This bill is the first step in the right direction to create more equity in the justice system. It is urgent that we pass this bill to protect the lives of Colorado citizens as well as the livelihood of good law enforcement officers. We must also not allow this to be the only solution - this is the first step in the right direction.</p>
SB20-217	Kate	burdess	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Too many people have been affected by excessive use by police. Black communities, communities of color and people experiencing homelessness are very rarely protected by the officers who are supposed to serve them. We have seen too many videos of police killing black men and women. I fear for the lives of my friends and their families constantly, too many of whom have already lost relatives to police violence. I strongly support this bill and hope that it will be the beginning of many reforms that are desperately needed to ensure equality.</p>
SB20-217	Katie	Richardson	Against	Self	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Katie	Richardson	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Hello, my name is Katie Richardson, I want to thank you today for hearing from us, for taking what little time you have to amend what this bill and we are thankful for those amendments. I don't pretend to fully understand the ramifications this bill will have on my husband's life, but what I want to share is an experience LEO wife</p> <p>I married my law enforcement officer just a mere 25 days ago. So for all intents and purposes my time as a law-enforcement officer wife is incredibly minimal, even though we've been together for 4 years, I have minimal experience in what it's like standing by a man who does this line of work.</p> <p>When we first started dating, I never understood why he never wanted anyone to know what he did for a living. He didn't want to tell me for a while, and as our relationship progressed he asked me not to tell my family what he did for a living. I never understood.</p> <p>I get it now. We are now fearful for not only the lives of our husbands but for the lives of our family. We cannot have a sticker on our cars for many reasons, the scariest example is we've been warned of people being followed home, so they know where we live so they know where they can find us so they know where they can hunt us</p> <p>I want to challenge you to think about what other profession the actions of a few reflect the character of the majority.</p> <p>I've never seen such a flip-flop of coverage one second praising officers for showing up on folks worst day of their lives, for being on the front lines of covid, to seeing officers as a threat.</p> <p>It was stated at one point during the revisions of this bill that it was a revenge bill, I know many changes have been made and we are very grateful for those changes but there's still the notion that they are guilty before proven innocent.</p> <p>I don't know you, and if you're married or how long you have been married, but if you are, I ask you to think back to the first month of your marriage, did you discuss divorce? Not because you didn't love your spouse, but because you needed to discuss how you would protect your family, your life savings, your house?</p> <p>I am proud to be in the bonds of marriage with a las enforcement officer, but you'll never hear me tell a stranger what he does, you'll never see a blue line flag outside my house, and once again not because we're proud...but because we're scared. We're scared of what lawmakers and media will do next to demonize our GOOD men.</p>
SB20-217	Kaylee	Grimshaw	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Kelly	Shelley	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I have been a police officer for over 23 years. My husband has also been a police officer for over 27 years. We have both served our communities for that length of time due to our love of our profession. To say I love my job and my community is putting it mildly. This is my calling...I believe every interaction with the community is the reason I do my job. I treat my community members with respect and dignity. Why are we being judged for the actions of a few cops in Minneapolis? I have done NOTHING to tarnish my badge nor has my husband. You are lumping over 800,000 police officers into a box that we don't belong in. Remember COVID, we don't get to stay safe at home! WE are the ones out making sure our nervous community felt safe! Now, we are being vilified as the enemy! WE are the ones who will run towards danger no matter the person we are going to help on the other end of 911. We don't get to choose who we serve, we just GO AND SERVE! We already have laws and policies we follow if we see excessive force. We already have measures put in place for any use of force in our agency. We train constantly, do you have any idea how much? Do you have any idea how much we have to know in regards to changes in law, policy, and procedure? We are the people who run to danger while others cower or run away. Are you the ones who remember all the law enforcement officers who die every year protecting and serving? Do you know it's always over 100 every year? Remember that when you vilify and lump us all together. Doing this to over 800,000 officers is a slap in the face of all the good we do every single day!! Police officers are being treated with hate and stereotypes due to us being BLUE! Isn't that opposite of how you want us to treat the public??? Kind of contrary to the notion of being fair with everyone if you lump all police officers together with those that we despise. Who hates a bad cop more...I can tell you it's US, THE GOOD COPS!!!! If your goal is to push us out so we no longer want to serve, congrats there will be lots that leave. It's already difficult to recruit and retain officers but since you obviously have NO idea about that you don't care. We are the ones who come running, what are you going to do when we give up and say it's not worth it?</p>
SB20-217	Kevin	Bay	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>This bill is so incredibly important and will fundamentally change things for the better for people who have been historically persecuted by the police. Adopting this will make Colorado a leader in the nation in police accountability, something obviously on everyone's mind right now.</p> <p>This is both the summation of a lot of hard and important work by activists, and the awareness raised by the protests in our own city last week, but indeed must only be the first step as we continue to reform our budget and invest in resources FOR our community, not deploying resources AGAINST them.</p>

SB20-217	Kira	Suyeishi	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear Committee Members and Representatives,</p> <p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217 *as-introduced*. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>I urge you to support the bill as introduced and allow it to remain intact. Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration and for your work representing your constituents in Colorado.</p>
SB20-217	Kira	Suyeishi	For	Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee Members and Representatives,</p> <p>The Asian Pacific American Bar Association (“APABA”) is a Colorado bar association that represents the interests of the Asian Pacific American (“APA”) community and attorneys; to speak on behalf of, and advocate for, the interests and ideas of APA attorneys in Colorado.</p> <p>We write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>SB20-217 contains extremely important provisions that work to promote law enforcement accountability and transparency, including body camera provisions, public reporting on policing, rules regarding police officers’ use of deadly force, rehiring officers who have been terminated for cause, explicitly outlawing chokeholds and protecting protestors from police violence, and limiting qualified immunity—which will allow officers who use excessive force to be financially liable for civil lawsuits.</p> <p>As an organization comprised of individuals who have committed ourselves to the principles of justice and protection under the law, we urge you to support SB20-217, which will work to hold police officers accountable, keep police departments transparent, and work to encourage and further community trust in police officers.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration and for your work representing your constituents in Colorado.</p> <p>Board of Directors Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Colorado</p>
SB20-217	Kiri	Brenner	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Kristen	Winter	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Kyriaki	Council	For	Self	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Leigh	Baldwin	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear Madam or Mr. Chair and Committee,</p> <p>I am Leigh Baldwin, the wife of a Deputy Sheriff in Yuma County. My husband has been in law enforcement for 6 years and before that served as Firefighter in Atlanta. When we decided to move back to my hometown of Wray, CO he willingly left his dream job to build a better life for our children. He has worked very hard to become a Narcotics K9 handler in an effort to battle drugs in NE Colorado. He is a good man, kind hearted, full of integrity and works with a crew of people just like him. Peace officers are a special breed. They have to be compassionate enough to comfort a boy who just accidentally killed his brother, yet tough enough to deal with those huge emotions and unimaginable sights. They respond to children who have committed suicide, overdoses, farming accidents, brutal acts of domestic violence and so much more. A serious list for the small communities of NE CO but it happens every day. When SB20-217 was first introduced we were planning our return to Georgia. I am pleased with the amendments that have been made to this bill and hope that they remain BUT this bill, along with more drastic things being done by other states, has demonized an entire group of people who do not deserve it. Not only do they not deserve it, they will not sit down and take it. The job they do is hard, often times thankless, barely makes ends meet for most and takes a bit of their soul each day.</p> <p>Several nights ago, in a tiny town in our county (pop. 258) my husband pulled over an atv driving recklessly on the street, to let them know that was not allowed. While he had that atv pulled over, an individual at a gathering a few houses down started screaming "Murderer" at my husband. This proves that even in the smallest communities, in the most rural counties of CO, peace officers are being demonized for the action of a few bad officers - who we as LEO's and their spouses despise. I ask that the bill be carefully considered in this stage. Even with the positive amendments, you will lose many good officers simply because the already extremely hard job they do has been changed forever, because of a few bad cops. I urge you to listen most to the officers themselves. They know the ins and outs of their jobs better than anyone. I now they still have oppositions to several items and any officers who take the time to express those are ones who WANT to protect and serve, be there when someone needs help, and save lives. Thank you.</p>
SB20-217	Lindsay	Rashid	Amend	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Lindsay	Weber	For	Self	Submitted text	I urge legislators to vote for this bill to increase police accountability and integrity. I also request that you continue to address police brutality and systematic racial injustice in all future efforts, not just now.
SB20-217	Lisa	Borquez	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am a resident of Douglas County and I would like to urge you to support SB20-217, the Law Enforcement Accountability and Integrity Act. It is of the utmost importance to me that the police are held responsible, as they are public servants and work for us. Additionally, we should consider how their out-sized budgets drain resources from schools, mental health resources, infrastructure, social safety nets, and other services that would diminish their importance and power in the community overall.</p> <p>The police don't need to be militarized. They don't need to work under the radar and protect the blue line. They don't need to put personal property above human lives. They work for us. They need to support the people. The Police Dept. is responsible for a number of so-called "office involved shootings" and they have blood on their hands. I would like to see the police ultimately fully disbanded and defunded, but in the meantime, let's consider oversight and accountability. This is a reasonable ask and I urge you to support this bill. I am watching and am proud of my elected representatives who are "walking the walk" and putting their values and support behind the people. I hope you do the right thing.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>Warmly, Lisa Borquez Zip: 80130</p>
SB20-217	Lottie	Brown	For	Self	Submitted text	I am for these changes.
SB20-217	Maddie	Ruwitch	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Please pass bill SB-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us. When Black and Brown people see police officers in their neighborhood, they should be able to rely on those officers to protect them, not criminalize or abuse them. Keep supporting SB20-217 and demand humane, equitable, and constitutional policing in Colorado communities!</p> <p>One of the most important aspects of this bill is that it will eliminate qualified immunity. This is really important because under qualified immunity, law enforcement officials are held to a much lower standard. With qualified immunity in place, law enforcement officials may continue to harm and kill black and brown people without fear that they will be held accountable. This reflects how systemic racism endures in our communities and it must end.</p> <p>Please pass bill SB-217. Listen to the voices of Black leaders in our community demanding equity and justice. We have ignored issues of police brutality and violence for too long and the passage of this bill is a step in the right direction towards a more equitable Colorado.</p>

SB20-217	Mae Ann	Conley	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Each day when my husband leaves I take a mental snapshot. A snapshot of what he looked like and what he said and I hold that image and those words in my mind all day until I see him again. I do this because as police wives we all know that moment they walk out the door could be the last time we see them. As police wives it is our greatest fear. But for me, right behind that fear is not remembering that last moment.</p> <p>I know there is work that needs to be done but I respectfully ask that you allow us the opportunity to be a part of the solution and not pass legislation that places additional burdens on the only people who are willing to selflessly run towards a danger so the rest of us can run to safety. My husband is a survivor of the 1999 Columbine High School tragedy and knows how it feels to be on both sides of a horrific situation. The actions of the first responders that day are one of the reasons he went into law enforcement.</p> <p>As police wives, we frequently hear the phrase “If they are brave enough to wear the badge, you have to be brave enough to let them” – I respectfully ask that when you are considering legislation regarding law enforcement you remember the families behind the badge.</p>
SB20-217	Marcus	Najera	For	Self	Uploaded file	<p>I am a successful biomedical scientist who has lived in 15 states and 2 countries through my academic and professional careers, yet I have had racial experiences with police officers in all places, including here in Denver. I am not a criminal, nor have I ever had any charges against me. Yet even as a Yale Fellow, participant at MIT and a scientist that has received national recognition for my work this still happens.</p> <p>My first experience was during high school at the age of 16. Though I never received any traffic violation, I was hit by 3 police officers while my date watched in a public setting. It was humiliating, and I never spoke to her again after I dropped her off at home. I was so young and naïve that I did not do anything about it, even to tell my family, and friends. The second incident my best friend and I were running errands for my mother, who is a physician. I was pulled over and my friend and I were cuffed with our hands behind our back and thrown on the ground and the hood of the car. They had mentioned I fit the description of the person that they were after. I got scratches and bruises from our interactions, as well as cut wrists from tight handcuffs, until they got a call on their radios, uncuffed both of us and left.</p> <p>Two years later I was arrested for a traffic violation where my sister and 2 of my best friends were with me. The officer pulled me out of the car with guns drawn on me and my face pressed against the pavement. I was arrested and held for 24 hours until the judge told me that they had lost my paperwork, so I no possibility for bail! I was sent to county jail and spent days in the floor where hardened criminals go for crimes like rape, assault, or murder. I tried to read and keep to myself, but I was beat up by inmates twice, as it was noticeable that I did not belong there. It turned out that my mother was a psychiatrist for that jail and once she found out that’s where I was, I was immediately was released. After 1 year of trial the case was dropped, but I was on house arrest, and could not attend college this year.</p> <p>My next experience I was tutoring students at a Starbucks next to the downtown campus. I was tutoring students on the subject of Nanotechnology and biomedical drug development. When a woman that was Caucasian started calling me a terrorist and called the police. It was an ordeal explaining that I was a tutor for the students that were present. The next incident I experienced was 3 people trying to car jack me at a gas station. I was stabbed, and though I got away, I did not call the police for fear of what they could do to me. Lastly while in Japan I was detained because the Koban which is Japanese for police said I stole the bicycle I was currently riding. However, it was given to me to use by my boss at the Osaka Institute of Technology Nanomaterials Microdevice Research Center. It was documented because I was the first American at that University, and one of the people of color in the most prestigious nanotechnology program by the national science foundation.</p>
SB20-217	Mark	Gelband	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I unequivocally support SB20-217 as an initial step in much needed police reform. Please do not water down this bill in any way. Do not even consider removing sections that end qualified immunity. It is time for the police to be held accountable.</p> <p>Thank you</p>

SB20-217	Mark	Suyeishi	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police.</p> <p>Please support SB20-217 intact *as is*. Please do not allow the qualified immunity provisions to be watered down even further. These are imperative to hold officers financially liable when they use excessive force or unjustified deadly force.</p> <p>Some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the current language regarding statements that were not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera to be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language.</p> <p>I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact.</p> <p>One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely.</p> <p>The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. The language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial.</p> <p>Thank you for your work in representing our community.</p>
SB20-217	Martin	Mercer	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Over the past few weeks, I've had friends who have dealt with being threatened with force, tear gassed, and shot, all by our city and state's law enforcement officers. One was shot in the face by a sponge bullet and sustained a break of her orbital and nose, and a severe concussion. This alone would be enough for me to feel the need to support strong legislation reforming law enforcement.</p> <p>However, this all came about as a response to a man's murder in Minneapolis. And it is for BIPOC and other people of color that this bill truly matters. We protest in their name and their honor, and I cannot emphasis enough, to request that the system that has caused so much pain for their communities (and therefore for our own) be changed fundamentally.</p> <p>Vote yes on this bill. History has its eyes on you.</p>
SB20-217	Mary	Parker	Amend	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Megan	Aragon	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear Madam or Mr. Chair and committee, my name is Megan Aragon and I oppose SB20-271. Our law enforcement officers are already presented with a very difficult job. They respond to calls for service and insert themselves into dangerous situations that no one else would want to do. They have been called to serve and protect our community and that is what most officers do. We cannot let the few bad police officers define the rest of our officers. Colorado, in general, has done very good police work. We have honorable law enforcement officers here, and they should not be punished for the mistakes of others and other departments that have outdated standards and policies. We are so thankful for the amendments that have already been made to SB20-217, but we feel that more change needs to be made. The haste with which this bill has been passed is alarming to police officers and they family as it puts them at greater risk for doing their job. We feel that it is unfair to assume that an officer tampered with body camera footage if their is any interruption in the footage. If you know technology, you know that it is not exempt from faults or malfunctions. Each case should be examined case to case to see if their was any ill intent. No other citizen is assumed to have done wrongdoing under similar circumstances. This bill would be taking away the right that every citizen has, even criminals, to be assumed innocent until proven guilty. Even before the unfortunate death of Mr. George Floyd, it was dangerous to be a law enforcement officer as well as to be the family of one. Our fear has exponentially increased. We are worried about our officers and the threats they face because of the demonization of their profession. Our children worry for their mothers and fathers. They don't understand why people hate their parents, and call then racist when they know them to be heroes who defend the weak and protect their community. We love our state and we know that we have good leaders in place who want the best for our community. We sincerely hope that you will take our testimony into consideration when deciding on SB20-217. Thank you for your time.</p>
SB20-217	Meghan	Myron-Karels	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am for this, it's a start, and we need to seriously consider refunding the police and reinvesting those funds into services that actually help people.</p>
SB20-217	Meghan	Dollar	Amend	Colorado Municipal League	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Melanie	Kesner	For	Interfaith Alliance of Colorado	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Melanie Rose Rodgers		For	Safe Access Colorado	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Melina	Bixler	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee,</p> <p>Thank you for taking time to read my testimony. I am a white Coloradan - born and raised - writing in support of SB20-217 to create more accountability for law enforcement officers who have used their power to harm black and brown folks and continue to get away with it.</p> <p>In Colorado we live by a code. A code established in our state constitution in 1876 to “promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.” This clear constitution preamble suggests that all Coloradans deserve to live within society free from oppression imposed by authority. What greater authority is there in this state than the policing system? Yet our police departments across the state have proved time and time again that they can and will use their power to disproportionately harm, kill, and oppress black and brown folks.</p> <p>Whether it’s killing Black men experiencing homelessness and mental health crises, like Michael Marshall and Marvin Booker - or firing into a moving car, killing a queer Latinx teenager Jessie Hernandez - or shooting an unarmed teen in the back, killing teenager De’Von Bailey - or killing a young Black man, Elijah Javon, by suffocation when he was already successfully handcuffed and restrained despite his repeated pleas of “i can’t breathe.” - police departments across this state have failed to hold their peace officers accountable.</p> <p>I know that together to ensure that the Colorado constitution is upheld and that people are protected and their welfare secured - for themselves and future generations.</p> <p>SB20-217 is a perfect example of how the Colorado General Assembly can work together to ensure accountability, ensure the safety of ALL citizens, and send the message that every citizen matters - especially those Black and Brown folks who have been historically and systematically oppressed. I urge you to support SB20-217, a bi-partisan bill that ensures all peace officers are accountable to the Colorado code and to uphold their responsibility to ensure the safety of ALL citizens.</p> <p>All people should be held accountable if they harm another. Regardless of whether they are a peace officer or a citizen. All people deserve to be treated with dignity. All people have the right to live free from fear of violence. Please support SB20-217 so that Black and Brown communities can also benefit from these rights to dignity and safety.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Melina Bixler</p>
SB20-217	Melissa	Holmes	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I fear for this state and what it is becoming. I am a second generation Colorado native and my children will be third generation Colorado natives. This is by far the worst I have ever seen our state and it saddens me. It saddens me that we are making radical changes based upon officers in a completely different state. Every state is different and we must do what is right for OUR state. I fear if there aren't additional amendments to the liability portion of the act, there will be a lot of officers resigning and taking early retirements. There is also a really hard time finding qualified recruits for this position as it is and this will only make it worse. I urge you to consider the fact that these officers top out at around \$90k a year, that's not a lot when you live in this expensive state. Why would anyone risk losing everything they have worked so hard for for a measly \$2,000 pay check every other week (after taxes and insurance)?! The amount of training and time lost with their family to serve and protect our citizens is now being punished even further. There are a lot more bad citizens out there than there are bad cops! Think about those citizens who are sue happy in today's society. So now we are going to encourage people to bring on civil law suits to officer's. The amount of hypocrisy is astonishing. The body cam portion needs to be amended as well. I understand the thought behind it and trying to make officers more cognizant of how they interact with the public. But this can be harmful for good officers who are human and make mistakes like forgetting to turn on their camera or audio. The ramifications are extreme in my opinion. I would love for our government officials to wear body cams with audio on all day! It would only be fair if you are questioning the integrity of our officers, we have the right to question the integrity of our officials. This bill is being rushed and I urge you to think of the consequences this will have if changes aren't made to it. We are not Minneapolis and our officers are not Derek Chauvin!</p>
SB20-217	Mia	Voss	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am in favor of SB20-217, the Law Enforcement Accountability and Integrity Act and support it 100%.</p>
SB20-217	Michael	Averett	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I would first like to introduce myself. My name is Mike Averett. I am a Colorado native. Born and raised in Littleton. I’m an army combat veteran and a police officer for the last decade. I’m a god fearing American who loves nothing more than to help the person next to me. I have given my entire adult life to serving my country and my community. I have never in my career been accused of misconduct. But this bill makes me fear being a cop. This bill leaves cops vulnerable. In a profession where it already hemorrhages good people because of the scrutiny we receive, this will only make things worse. This will force me to uproot and move somewhere that supports their police and cares about their quality of life. This will truly be detrimental to every community and the police the serve them in the state of Colorado.</p>

SB20-217	Michael	Albertini	For	Self	Submitted text	I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Michaela	Myers	For	Self	Submitted text	People don't get better without feedback. If we do not hold them accountable for their actions, they will never learn to do better next time. Thank you for supporting this bill and the creation of clear and measurable guidelines around the interaction of law enforcement officers with the public. I wish there were fewer exceptions around when the cameras can be turned off/footage kept from public release. I also wish officers had to release their footage sooner and after ANY kind of interaction that resulted in ANY kind of injury to ANYone involved, NOT only after a complaint of misconduct has been made. And I wish it was starting NOW! Not 3 years from now.
SB20-217	Michale	Ourso	For	Self	Submitted text	I shocked, appalled and ashamed of police burtality seen in recent weeks. I consider Denver to be a progressive city, not one riddled with hate and violence. The 2016 BLM should have been enough to end police beatings and murders by police. Yet in a horrific response to police brutality on POC and the brutal murder of George Floyd, the police decide to attack the public for speaking out peacefully. 1st amendment rights have been violated. The public has now faced missing eyes, concussions, hit inappropriately with projectiles, rubber bullets, pepper spray and tear gas. It seems as though we've become a communist state in the matter of weeks. I beg and deploy you to help fix this issue. Defund the police and fund campaigns that help addicts, help poverty, help education. Please we beg of you!
SB20-217	Michelle	Mavis	For	Self	Submitted text	I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time, Michelle
SB20-217	Michelle	Skalisky	Against	Self	Submitted text	The passage of this bill will significantly impact the lives of police officers/deputies and their families. You cannot allow the actions of a small percentage of cops in this nation to negatively impact the other 99% of law enforcement. As a wife of a police officer, I deeply understand the sacrifice that law enforcement and their families face on a daily basis. Do you ever have to wonder if your loved one will return home safely at the end of their shift? Its on my mind constantly. Passage of this bill will increase the risk that law enforcement won't do their jobs correctly because of the unbelievable consequences involved within this bill. I am particularly concerned with the personal financial liability involved for law enforcement in this bill. Do you know what the average police officer/deputy makes in Colorado? They obviously don't work for the money. There are many other jobs in Colorado that meet their skillset that would pay a lot more. Why push the financial burdens on families that already sacrifice so much? Passage in this bill will most likely result in increased injury and death to law enforcement in Colorado. The bill sponsors and State of Colorado should then be held financially responsible and personally liable for any officer/deputy that is injured following passage. If the bill sponsors took the time to get to know law enforcement, they would understand the utter desire these unique individuals have to want to improve their communities and protect citizens. There are VERY FEW individuals that could ever 1) have the needed skillset to become a cop, 2) pass law enforcement's rigorous hiring processes and 3) have the desire to put their lives on the line and sacrifice their life for the lives of others. STOP making their lives harder. Law enforcement already have a hard enough time performing their jobs every day. Have you ever been spit on by someone carrying an infectious disease? Have you ever had a gun pointed at you or been shot at? Law Enforcement endure more on a daily basis than the media would ever portray. Why not try living a day in law enforcement's shoes before putting this bill in place? I believe it would change your minds significantly. Passage of this bill will drive all the good law enforcement out of this state. You will ruin Colorado and your citizens will have to figure out how to protect themselves. Do you really want that?

SB20-217	Mike	Toillion	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>While I'm disappointing in some of the amendments added by Republicans, this bill is still an important first step in defunding and reforming the police in Colorado.</p> <p>The past 2 weeks have been some of the darkest for the United States of America. Many of us have always known that the racial roots of our system ran deep, but the blatant police brutality captured on video during these protests and the police's response of indifference is a huge blight on our country's ideals.</p> <p>Eliminating qualified immunity is crucial to this fight. We cannot remove an individual's choices from the consequences of those choices. All cops need to be responsible for their actions. Yes, it's a dangerous job, but that doesn't give a cop the right to break the law and avoid punishment.</p> <p>Again, this bill does not go far enough. A cop should waive their right to privacy while on duty and their body cam should be worn at all times. I work for NASA, and I have to read an agreement that I waive my right to privacy when I login to my work computer. We all make sacrifices for our job, and this is a small one for police.</p> <p>Furthermore, we need to COMPLETELY remove the police from review of these encounters. They should be witnesses at most. I know this part of the bill was removed, but it should not be forgotten and I hope that future bills will succeed where this one failed.</p> <p>The violence affects everyone. The power dynamic affects everyone. But all of it affects black people even more so. This bill needs to pass because we need to show our black neighbors and community that we are listening. We need to take the FIRST step to correcting this. We also need to show the rest of the country a model for moving forward and defunding the police.</p>
SB20-217	Monique	Graham	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I'm writing to express my concern about the Bill 20-217 "Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity."</p> <p>First, statute 24-31-902 presents a concern for the physiological response for police officers. This statute would cause officers to be more concerned with initiating footage of the entire encounter, rather than being first and foremost concerned with lives that might be in danger, and further, their own. Police officers make split second decisions every day in their line of work; placing this additional procedure as a mandate could cost someone their life.</p> <p>In addition, the missing footage will automatically assume the officer's misconduct is greatly concerning. What is happening to "innocent until proven guilty?" I know we are living in highly escalated emotional times, but because an officer acted against protocol and caused the death of a man, should not make the generalization that all officers are bad or act as such. Don't let one bad apple ruin the entire bushel.</p> <p>In Colorado Statute 19-3.3-104 it states that an officer is not immune to civil law suits or liability for damages, loss, injury or liability, caused by the intentional or willful and wanton misconduct of that officer. This indicates that good officers will be protected, and on the flip side bad officers will be held accountable for wrong doings.</p> <p>Statute 13-21-131 states that an officer can be sued in civil court for anything, even if they were acting in good faith. The majority of lawsuits that are going to come from this statute, are not going to be the extreme cases that we most commonly see in the news today. Unfortunately, due to society and our media today, there are people who will take advantage of this statute in order to gain money for frivolous claims due to the burden of proof being so low in civil court.</p> <p>With the statutes and concerns listed above, you will see an exodus of law enforcement officers willing to put their personal and professional lives on the line. Where will Colorado be without any law enforcement to protect its citizens? I hope our community is ready to defend their homes, as I don't see police officers could or would come to our aid with the statutes presented in Bill 20-217.</p> <p>I implore you to continue amending or remove the statutes listed above in the interest of our state and the police officers who protect and serve our community every time they put on the uniform.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
SB20-217	Morgan	Royal	For	New Era Colorado	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Nicholas	Grossman	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>House Finance Committee members - Thank you for continuing to move forward with passing Senate Bill 20-217 as it is currently written to help increase law enforcement accountability in our state.</p> <p>As a lifelong Colorado resident, I believe that these measures are long overdue and will lead to meaningful, positive changes in communities throughout Colorado.</p> <p>Please keep the current law intact with all of its key provisions and do NOT do anything to water down this bill.</p> <p>The bill's sponsors have carefully crafted these laws specifically to limit law enforcement abuse and increase taxpayer oversight of what our public funds are being used for, both of which the vast majority of Colorado voters support.</p> <p>Specifically, please support the continued inclusion of the following essential provision that is currently part of the bill, which would help END "qualified immunity" for peace officers who have caused harm to one or more members of the Colorado community.</p> <p>"Qualified immunity is not a defense to the civil action."</p> <p>It is critically important that the key provision above is included in the final bill when it is soon passed by the Colorado legislature and signed by Governor Polis.</p> <p>Thank you for your service to our state and for taking bold actions now to protect the people of Colorado.</p>
SB20-217	Nicole	Skattum	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I believe this bill to be unfair and unjust to the good men and woman that serve and protect this country and our community. I do not believe the majority should suffer because of the actions of a few. There is already so much judgement and the public does not respect the work that these brave men and women to day in and day out. The sacrifices that are made by LEO's AND the sacrifices of their families for the general public cannot even begin to comprehend! The world already has a target on on LEO's back and because of this hiring new police officers has proven to be extremely challenging and a few bad apples do get through. With more judgement and scrutiny that this bill would provide, I feel we will lose more and more of the good ones we have left. The good men and women will not stay on with their departments. Holding the ones that are left to become personally liable is not a risk many will choose to continue risking each day, in this sue-happy society we live in now it will not be with the risk! Having body cams and possibility for situations to be misconstrued and misunderstood...is not worth the risk anymore. As a PROUD Law Enforcement Officer's wife, I would not want my husband to continue to risk his life to protect the people and community that does not support him. I am urging you to please consider the consequences on the world if this law is passed! PLEASE vote AGAINST this bill.</p>
SB20-217	Nicole	Herrle	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I want to thank each of you for listening to and reading through the testimonies tonight. I had not planned to write in but after hearing so many tonight I felt it a duty. My husband is an officer and FOP member. He is chosing to trust you all and this process to make sure our family stays safe and his job remains true to its core of protecting citizens and enhances their trust. We echo concerns of removal of qualified immunity and the implications of that on our family, particularly our children who did not chose to enter this life as my husband did and I did when I married him. We are concerned at the speed of this bill but understand the severity of our current national state and the need for reform. We ask that you consider reform with time for appropriate implementation.</p> <p>Thank you again for all you are doing to ensure our communities get a voice.</p>
SB20-217	Oqua	Gowin	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Even though bad things happen in this world so does a lot of good. I see it everyday. I am fortunate to say that I have an amazing extended family and they do great things both big and small to protect and serve our community. I know first hand how much they care about and love our city. These amazing men and women are honorable and do what's right. They don't see color they see people. They protect us from the evil we don't see or hear about because they show up everyday. They will not waiver even in the worst situations. They will be there to take care of you even when you hate them. 99% of them are good and we need them to shield us from the dark. So I encourage you not to lump the good ones with the 1% who disgrace the badge. My family is blue family and they don't stand for injustice they fight it. I am so thankful for them and I know that they will continue to hold the line. So yes let's be upset about the injustice but let's work together to make this world better. Please know I'm against the police brutality that occurred but I am blue family. Every day I watch my husband leave and I know that he would give his life to protect others (even those that hate him). As a police wife that is the burden I carry.</p> <p>So if you are anti police I encourage you to realize that every career has bad apples but that doesn't mean they are all bad.</p> <p>Let's not make the jobs of the 99% harder because of the 1% who should not have the honor of wearing the badge. We should not bring strife to the families of those who serve we should support them, because the families sacrifice daily for the greater good.</p>

SB20-217	Paul	Skattum	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I would like to ask this bill be amended. As an Officer for the past 14 years and an SRO for the past 8 years, I have dedicated myself to my community. I and many of my fellow officers participate in boards and community events outside of our Law Enforcement duties. We love the communities we work in and we strive everyday to give them the best service we can. This bill has some valid points and ideas, but eliminating qualified immunity will destroy the Law Enforcement community as a whole. We willing enter situations where the vast majority of Law makers would be running from. We drive to our possible deaths everyday we go on patrol and we do that because we believe in keeping the wolves out of the sheep pen. Ending qualified immunity would allow every ambulance chasing attorney to bring a law suit against us every time we have to handcuff anyone. I understand you are under the false belief we would only be sued if we were not following the law, but the reality is we are sued constantly for following the law. We and our departments face constant law suits for officers protecting victims. I am so ashamed of our law makers and our community for turning, on the vary people who willingly give their lives to protect you. You call us evil, yet you are not willing to get in our cars and ride with us. You call us racists, but you do not stand next to us on calls and personally watch our day to day interactions. Before you judge and dismantle the very people who protect you from true evil, come sit with us, come ride along with us, come sit with the SRO's and see our interactions. Come see the other side of the profession you hate so much. Come see the side only the people in blue are forced to live. Please rethink parts of this bill and understand the Police stand with everyone in the county condemning the death of George Floyd. The vast majority of Officers are good, faithful people who would give their life to protect any person in this room even people who are trying to portray us as murders. We do believe in what we do and we pray you will understand how dangerous your actions will be to our profession. Thank you</p>
SB20-217	Rachel	Zinanti	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>I appreciate the amendments passed in the senate bill, but I still have areas of concern.</p> <p>The recent demonization of law enforcement in the media, by leaders, and by legislators across the country scares me and parts of this bill supports this narrative. Colorado is, and can do, better than this.</p> <p>The majority of law enforcement is good and do their job honorably every day. Individual agency stats across the state of Colorado as well as the 2019 FBI Uniform Crime report support this.</p> <p>Many areas of this bill automatically assume ill intent of a police officer if something goes wrong. We're innocent until proven guilty in this country, this bill defaults to assume police aren't.</p> <p>While the language around lack of footage for body worn cameras has improved it still implies there is a presumption of nefarious activity if video is missing and states that this video is inadmissible in court. Get rid of this.</p> <p>The ramifications for law enforcement, and their families, if a mistake is made at work are huge. In addition to changes that have been made, allow law enforcement officers to purchase their own insurance for coverage against civil lawsuits to secure their livelihood and that of spouses and children.</p> <p>Allow people who protect their communities, see the worst of humanity, and put their lives on the line daily the same courtesy of other professions. Don't penalize families because someone in their home puts on a uniform to go to work.</p> <p>Law enforcement, and their families, already worry enough and deal with the fallout of the realities of the job daily. Don't add to their burden with language in this bill that tarnishes the good and needed work of this profession.</p>
SB20-217	Rebecca	Terlouw	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Support!</p> <p>Bill SB20-217 is the right decision for the citizens of Colorado. It is a necessary step in creating a just, fair, and equal Colorado.</p> <p>Thank you, Rebecca Terlouw 80205 Resident</p>
SB20-217	Ron	Ruggiero	For	SEIU Colorado State Council	Uploaded file	

SB20-217	Roxanne	Gajewski	For	Self	Submitted text	I am writing this in support of SB 217 AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police brutality and violence against People of Color and protesters and to hold those officers in violation 100% accountable for their actions. This need is urgent and overdue. There is more work to be done, but this bill is an important step, and delaying until 2023 places Black and Brown communities and individuals in further danger. Please support the immediate enactment of this bill, and subsequent bills that help correct racial injustice. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Ryan	Nisly	Amend	Self	Submitted text	As a bartender, I am held liable up to \$150k for my actions. Why should I be 6x more liable than a police officer using excessive force. This is a step in the right direction 100%. As long as bartendersrs are held to more responsibly than the police, it will be a living testimony to corruption.
SB20-217	Ryan	Gajewski	For	Self	Submitted text	I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Ryan	Flach	For	Self	Submitted text	I am submitting testimony in favor of SB20-217. With the power they wield, law enforcement should be held to the highest standards of accountability. I believe this bill is a step in the right direction toward a more just balance and will lead to fewer acts of police brutality, and thus greater community trust of those sworn to protect and serve.
SB20-217	Samantha	Geerdes	Amend	Self	Submitted text	My husband has been a police officer for 10 years. I could go on for pages about what a good officer he is and the countless selfless things he has done to help others that goes way above and beyond his job description. However, I want to share a personal story. We have a 3 year old son named Callen. A couple days ago Callen’s daycare teacher mentioned to me how Callen is obsessed with wearing the dress- up police hat in his classroom. He proudly wears it around all day and announces “This my dad’s hat”. She thought it was adorable and wanted to share. I gave him a big hug, walked out the door and cried all the way home. Callen is so proud of his daddy and loves his police “unicorn” (uniform) and his police cars. I’m terrified for the day another kid tells him his daddy is a racist or a murderer because of his job. I understand the hurt and anger out there right now and that there are terrible people who do and say terrible things. But my husband and his brothers and sisters in blue risk their lives every single day to protect others. They have to make split second decisions when their lives and the lives of others are on the line. This doesn’t excuse any inexcusable actions done by police, but I urge you all to think long and hard about how this bill will affect police officers and their ability to do their jobs to the already high standards that are set for them. We have to take care of our police so they can continue to take care of us. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Sara	Sankovich	For	Self	Submitted text	We need greater police accountability and integrity. Our systems do not currently protect our communities and we simply must do what’s right by passing this bill. Thank you.
SB20-217	Sara Tatianna Santos		For	Self	Submitted text	I am writing with urgency in support of SB20-17. This is a crucial and beyond necessary change NEEDED in Colorado.
SB20-217	Sarah	Verver	Neutral	Self	Submitted text	I ask that the amendments are kept for the bill. The removal of the personal liability amendment provides the officers family protection while keeping accountability of law enforcement. People keep telling me the officer I know may be good. However, all officers I have spoken to do not agree with the murder of George Floyd. All officers on social media and in the news have made comments in support of equality and Black Lives Matter. The majority of officers are good and that should not be overlooked. It is not just the officer I personally know. It is entire police departments nationwide, showing their support. Officers should not have to choose between their family and to serve and protect their community, regardless of race, gender, age. Officers should not have to worry about not coming home because they responded to a call for help, doing their job. Without the added amendments, officers would also have to worry about risking their loved one's home and savings in addition to not coming home at all. How much is too much of a cost?
SB20-217	SARAH	ALCORN	Against	Self	Submitted text	Dear Senators and Committee, My name is Sarah and I am a Police Officer's spouse. First, I want to extend a deep thank you to the amendments put into place for bill SB20-17. Thank you for hearing our voices and for acting. There are honorable men and women who do this job day in and day out. My husband is no exception. I am afraid for my husband’s safety more now than I ever have been. I worry about the demonization of our brave men and women in the media and by leaders and legislators across our nation. I implore you to consider the use of body cameras and the negative impact of using language that implies our officers are acting nefariously if they malfunction or are not on. I implore you to recognize the fact that these men and women put their lives on the line and run into the fray to save innocent lives and now they will have to take extra time before saving those lives to ensure they are not making any mistakes. This precious time to act will be stalled by the considerations of the ramifications of a mistake, the cost of their life, their family’s well being and the life of the person in need. I implore you to remember there are thousands like my husband, men and women who took the oath of an officer to heart and uphold it every day.

SB20-217	Scott	Ossim	For	Self	Submitted text	I am asking you to support SB 217, the Police Integrity and Accountability act AS INTRODUCED. It is our responsibility to prevent police violence and do everything in our power to stop the police from targeting and killing Black and Brown people, as well as protesters. Police who commit crimes should be held accountable for their actions. This is an urgent need, and as the bill stands, enacting it by 2023 is too far away. Police need to be held accountable for their racist profiling and targeting of Black people TODAY. This bill is a step in the right direction and I urge you to use it to pass this bill and pass subsequent bills that defund the police to support communities health, education, and social services. Thank you for your time.
SB20-217	Shannon	Hachenberger	Against	Self	Submitted text	I am coming to you today as a spouse of a law enforcement officer to ask that you please vote no on SB 20-217. Although some good changes were made before the Senate passed this bill, I feel like it's being used to punish our law enforcement. Just a few short weeks ago we were honoring our law enforcement officers and now they are being attacked. They are being spit at and called all kinds of hateful things. Rocks, frozen water bottles, and other debris thrown at them all while trying to do their jobs protecting citizens. Yet, somehow they are the bad guys. Some have been followed and targeted at their own homes. My biggest concern in this bill is taking away qualified immunity for peace officers and allowing them to be personally liable for any mistake they might make. How many of you are required to make split second decisions in stressful situations in the course of your work? How about having to do that with the weight of possibly making the wrong decision and being sued for it? Law enforcement has been demonized by the media, by leaders all throughout the country and now by legislators. There are many good men and women out there protecting our streets and doing good things every day. They hear all the hate for law enforcement, yet they still get up everyday, put on the uniform and go out into the community to do it all over again. No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop...or their spouse.
SB20-217	Sheryl	Bishop	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Tami	Reeder	Amend	Self	Submitted text	I see a lot of positive to this bill but I ask that with everything else you heard today that it's taken into account how much of what was shared by those against law enforcement was not fully factual and was emotionally driven. While lives have been hurt or taken, and there's absolutely no good feeling in that, peace officers face a lot of people who aren't not accountable, not honest, have no regard for the lives in their community, themselves, or the peace officers they encounter and if they are given too much power to behave without regard for humanity or order with this bill it will have negative effects and undesired results by everyone trying to make things better. We are in this together so please keep in mind majority of our officers do this to serve, not to enforce. They generally hate having to do anything besides be there to help their communities. Thank you for your time and consideration and all your hard work to make this bill right.
SB20-217	Tani	Suyeishi	For	Self	Submitted text	I write to urge you to support SB20-217. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us, and our communities have been devastated by the frequent deaths and injuries of black and brown people at the hands of the police. Furthermore, some groups and lobbyists are proposing an amendment to address a "potential unintended consequence." They are asking to change the language regarding statements that are not recorded when an officer fails to activate or reactive his/her body-worn camera be presumptively inadmissible in a "prosecution related to the incident." They are asking the language be changed to a "prosecution of an officer related to the officer's conduct during the incident" – or similar language. I disagree with this proposal, and please keep the language as-is intact. One of the problems and the huge need for the bill is that police officers are so rarely prosecuted and held accountable. So changing the language from “prosecution related to the incident” to something along the lines of "prosecution of an officer" significantly changes the substantive meaning since officers are prosecuted so rarely. The language as-is currently incentivizes officers to not deliberately turn off their body cameras at whim (there are well documented instances of officers turning their cameras off and on when beneficial to them) if they want whatever statements coming in from the suspect to be admissible at trial. In a worst case example, the language as-is makes it so that if an officer turns off his camera, applies some kind of excessive force or threat to the suspect to get a confession, that confession cannot come in at the defendant's trial. The language as-is incentivizes officers to follow the rules and protect defendants' rights to due process and a fair trial. Thank you for your consideration and for your work representing your constituents in Colorado.
SB20-217	Tara	Robinson	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	TATIANA	CHANDEE	For	Self	Submitted text	Everyone in the capitol works for Coloradans and we need everyone --- the Governor, Democrats and Republicans --- to champion SB20-217 so that it passes intact and with all its key provisions. Colorado communities should not have to live in fear of the officials meant to serve and protect us. Thank you.

SB20-217	Taylor	Edwards	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear committee, my name is Taylor and I am a proud spouse to a law enforcement officer in Colorado and while i am thankful for the amendments that have been put in place I am still fearful of this bill. My husbands job has always been dangerous but he felt an overwhelming amount of support but now that support is gone and he is going out risking his life for a community that doesn't value his life. The over all voice that has been heard is that all cops are bad which we have to know is not the case. I think in times like these we need to come together and work for change, but this bill has happened so fast and without the input from law enforcement. I'm just scared that we are heading in a direction that'll make it impossible for good cops to do their jobs. My kids who have always thought of their daddy as a hero are now being told not to tell people what he does for a living and that some people will hate him simply because of the uniform he puts on. I'm scared that this lack of support from our community will grow and our whole lives will have to be turned upside. I am fearful for the future looks like.</p>
SB20-217	Teah	Romano	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>Thank you for the current amendments and hearing our voices today. As a wife to a current Law Enforcement Officer I cannot help but feel a whirlwind of emotions. First and foremost, being that cops are demonized by our leaders, legislators, and the media. Monday evening my husband came home telling me two individuals asked how he goes to sleep at night being a cop. He has always been proud of what he does, but now even he questions what he is doing because others are seeing how they are represented. And represented unfairly at that. He has spent his entire adult life pursuing his career. This was not his backup plan nor does he have a backup plan, until this week. We have discussed various scenarios and how they would affect our family, our son, and our futures. Sadly, we are being forced to decide whether he should be a cop or not and that should not be the case. Living in fear based on your profession is absurd. We are angry with the way good cops are represented and demonized right next to the bad ones. They can't all go down in flames because of a few who act poorly. I am against SB-217. Thank you.</p>
SB20-217	Teresa	Casillas	For	The Law Office of Teresa M. Casillas	Submitted text	<p>As a long term member of the legal community and more importantly as the mother of a brown 16 year old, I beg you to listen to the voices of all mothers worried sick everytime our children leave the sanctuary of their home.</p> <p>Be on the right side of history! We, as Mothers, demand humane, equitable and constitutional policing in our communities.</p>
SB20-217	Therese	Gist	Amend	Self	Submitted text	<p>Please vote yes on SB20-217</p> <p>Dear Colorado Legislators,</p> <p>My name is Therese Gist and I have been a Law Enforcement employee for 6 years. I am writing this email to my legislators with the intention to discuss my concerns regarding Senate Bill 217. I don't have any arguments against holding Police Accountable for their actions. My concerns are the drastic changes this bill would have on public safety.</p> <p>First and foremost, I feel it is imperative to say: the rushed manner in which this bill is being passed is both reckless and inconsiderate. Law enforcement and their respective representatives have been more than willing to participate in open and respectful discussion to implement changes that would be of benefit to the public. The actions being taken currently, with the processing of this bill, the timeline, etc. is a direct law enforcement and far cry from a legitimate consideration for the public or public interest. A bill like this respectfully requires consideration in many areas and I have no doubts if you could just slow down this process, and allow US to be heard, our representatives would have the opportunity to make reasonable recommendations and amendments that would continue to protect both law enforcement and the public. We should NOT be tearing each other apart right now, we need to be WORKING TOGETHER.</p> <p>What is paramount and horrifying is the response Police Officers will make should this bill be passed in its current state. Every Officer I know plans to resign. I am confident that within 1 year well over half of Officers all across the state will resign (likely a lowball estimation). This would leave Colorado a very dangerous place, where the leftover Police are scared to take any action due to a number of factors this bill's flaws produce. Crime will skyrocket and criminals will prey on the innocent like never before. My heart worries for those that will be victimized and unable to defend themselves.</p> <p>I would ask that you vote against this measure and encourage your colleagues to do the same. Not in the interest of requiring less accountability of the police, but in the interest of doing it in a correct, informed and transparent manner, with reasonable time for review and consideration, so that when evil preys on the innocent, the public knows that when they call 911 we will still respond with urgency to help.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Detective Therese Gist</p>

SB20-217	Tierra	Zuniga	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>Dear House Finance Committee,</p> <p>My name is Tierra Zuniga. I have lived in Colorado my whole life, being born in Denver. I'm a highest honor student at my high school with a 4.6 GPA. I intend to be a fourth generation college student and I am involved in my schools theater program. I am an educated and privileged black woman and I am choosing to use my privilege to speak out against injustice.</p> <p>I support Senate Bill 20-217, "Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity". When I think about being in danger my first thought is never "I can just call the police." When I walk down the street and see a cop car I look down, walk slow as I've been told to do and avoid the possibility of being stopped by the police. Not that I'm doing anything wrong, I'm simply walking but I've been shown countless times that the police are allowed to hurt or even kill me if they feel threatened in any way.</p> <p>I've also been shown that if I do die at the hands of the police they will be celebrated as community heroes. My biggest fear today as a black woman is the police. My question is who polices the police? They have so much power. It's been very clear that their power goes to the extent of the capability to take a human's life.</p> <p>This bill allows the public to hold the police accountable for their actions. For too long the police have been excused for killing innocent lives. I support this bill for Elijah McClain. I support this bill for my older BLACK brother who I fear for everyday. I want to feel protected by the police. I'm tired of being afraid. Please take the actions we need to better the future of children like me and children to come.</p> <p>Please show me that you see me by voting to protect me and my people. My family. Thank you so much for your time.</p> <p>Tierra Zuniga</p>
SB20-217	Tiffanie	Moorman	Against	Self	Uploaded file	
SB20-217	Wendy	Rochman	For	Self	Submitted text	<p>We need to re-appropriate funding to the police. This means requiring police funding be used to ensure the safety of the public, people of all colors deserve to be treated fairly and humanely. I believe it is unfortunate that we need to pass a law stipulating these simple concepts for "peace officers", yet clearly we must.</p> <p>We also must rethink how public safety funds are appropriately appropriated to promote success for all members of society. This includes taking some of the funding for police forces and appropriating it to housing, transportation, education, public health (including mental health). More funds spent to ensure all members of society are prosperous will result in less policing needed.</p>
SB20-217	William	Gaskins	Against	Self	Submitted text	<p>I am a 25 year officer. I understand the need for police reform. Yes, departments need change, but there are departments that all ready exceed some of these standards. They took into account their community, the law, court rulings, and actually listened to their officers. I think that this is the wrong way to go about this. In the rush to put this together there are somethings that you failed to consider.</p> <p>On page 13 line 3-5 read - 13-21-131. Civil action for deprivation of rights - definition. (1) A PEACE OFFICER, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 24-31-901 (2), EMPLOYED BY A LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHO</p> <p>Why does this exclude all officer employed by the state? State Patrol, Campus Police, Park Rangers...</p> <p>Page 19 24-31-305 I am injured on/off duty, extended vacation, taking time off from work to follow my dream and it does not work out and want to return. Because of this I cannot or did not complete my training. Now once I come back or can complete the training I have no way to petition to have my certification re-instated?</p> <p>Under 18-8-802(1.5)(d), page 17 lines 8-17, states " AN INCIDENT RESULTING IN SERIOUS BODILY INJURY OR DEATH TO ANY PERSON, THE PEACE OFFICER'S EMPLOYER SHALL SUBJECT THE PEACE OFFICER TO DISCIPLINE, UP TO AND INCLUDING TERMINATION, AND THE P.O.S.T. BOARD SHALL PERMANENTLY DECERTIFY THE PEACE OFFICER UPON RECEIPT OF NOTICE OF THE PEACE OFFICER'S DISCIPLINE"</p> <p>With this wording, it does no matter what the department's discipline is, POST is required to decertify without taking into account anything. So if the department puts a letter in my jacket, for whatever reason, I am done because the state SHALL PERMANENTLY DECERTIFY. There should be some way to petition POST to get my certification back.</p> <p>As far as body worn camera's what if the victim, yes the victim, refused to be interviewed with the body worn camera? Are officers suppose to walk away and not obtain a statement? What if the only way I can obtain the statement is to turn off my camera, at their request.</p>