

From: Ann Schroeder

Sent: Saturday, April 1, 2023 4:33 PM

To: Tom Burditt; Kevin Christie; Joseph Andriano; Angela Arsenault; Ela Chapin; Kari Dolan; Kenneth Goslant; Thomas Oliver; Barbara Rachelson; Peninah Hodin; Martin LaLonde; William Notte

Subject: In support of S.6, An act relating to law enforcement interrogation policies

Dear House Judiciary Committee and Committee Assistant,

I am writing in support of S.6, An act relating to law enforcement interrogation policies.

Please ask the Committee Assistant to add this to the record.

I was stunned to learn that under current Vermont law, police officers are permitted to lie to suspects and witnesses during questioning. This bill would prevent law enforcement from employing threats, physical harm, deception, or psychologically manipulative interrogation tactics on youth. Apparently youth are three times more likely than adults to make a false confession. This serves no one.

I was glad to see that the original age of 18 in the "Statement of purpose of bill as introduced" was raised to 22.

In addition to addressing the issue of youth, the bill says that this fall the Vermont Criminal Justice Council, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General, shall collaborate and create a model interrogation policy that applies to all persons subject to various forms of interrogation no matter their age.

In addition to youth, people with mental and physical disabilities and people of color are at particular risk of manipulation and exploitation during these interrogations. And no one should be on the other end of threats, deception, physical harm, or manipulation.

After this policy is created, stakeholders will have input on the model interrogation policy and one model will be created for all law enforcement.

I have to wonder why some definitions that were in the original version of S.6 were removed, such as a list of psychologically manipulative interrogation tactics.

I like the way Connecticut's SB 1071 outlines deceptive tactics:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2023/TOB/S/PDF/2023SB-01071-R00-SB.PDF>

Something else I wonder about comes from Massachusetts S 90.

[S 90 - Massachusetts Senate \(192nd\) - Open States](#)

It mentions that "A juvenile's statement made during custodial interrogation shall not be admissible as evidence against the juvenile in any proceeding, unless 6 (1) the juvenile is represented by an attorney," etc.

I see no mention of attorney representation in S.6.

While I would like to see harmful tactics banned for individuals of all ages much sooner, overall this bill is an improvement over current law.

Please vote in support of S.6.

Thank you.

Ann Schroeder
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