

I'm Carver Maxwell, I'm a Freshman at North Country Union High School and a resident of the town of Coventry. Before I get into my testimony I would like to thank the members of the committee for inviting the Council to speak with the members and have a general discussion. Having conversations like this are great first steps in building connections to strengthening bonds to make it easier for us to work together later on. I would also like to note that my testimony reflects my views and stances, not the general consensus of the Youth Council.

My main focus to work on with the Government Operations committee is police reform, which much light has been shed on in recent years.. Although more awareness is being spread around the issue. Nothing is being changed. This issue has been affecting young Vermonters of colour like myself, who are wary around law enforcement due to the wide lack of training and crisis management, and fearful that I may be on the receiving end of something grave. This fear should not be happening in the first place, and citizens of colour should have the right to look to law enforcement for protection, not to look at them with scepticism.

Many youths in my community have felt that their perspectives are merely "swept-under-the-carpet" or heard but only for publicity purposes. Part of why I applied to the council is to boost my community's youth voice, especially those who are in the minority ethnic group, a group that remains largely underrepresented in the state. I hope that this meeting can be the start of a great connection between the Council & Legislature and we can move to better the lives of young people in Vermont. I feel we have a right as Representatives of Vermonters, to ensure the Government is accountable and transparent for all. Thank you for your time.