

Racial justice is justice. It is not a special interest; it is simply justice. Justice denied to anyone or any group indicates the lack of justice in our society. We all suffer. Instituting an oversight board commits Vermont to recognizing that racism and implicit bias still disfigure our criminal justice system and that we are serious about eliminating its ability to distort our system of justice. Throughout the criminal justice system there are people of good will who want to erase the effects of bias; this bill provides the means for doing so while it declares to every citizen and resident of Vermont that we will live up to our highest values of fairness, inclusion, justice and democracy whatever the cost. I am white, I do not directly experience racism or racial bias. But I know that the quality of my life would immensely improve if my friends who are not white could feel the freedom of movement and could enjoy the surety of fair and impartial policing, judgement and, when necessary, sentencing; if every effort was made to uphold their human dignity and equal treatment. I urge the passage of H.492 and its companion bill S.116

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