

1 TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

2 The Committee on Judiciary to which was referred Senate Bill No. 219  
3 entitled “An act relating to addressing racial bias and excessive use of force by  
4 law enforcement” respectfully reports that it has considered the same and  
5 recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by  
6 striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the  
7 following:

8 Sec. 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT

9 (a) This act is a continuation of the General Assembly’s work over the  
10 past several years to create meaningful reforms to address any systemic racism  
11 and disproportionate use of force by law enforcement. Such reforms include  
12 2017 Acts and Resolves No. 54, an act relating to the Racial Disparities in the  
13 Criminal and Juvenile Justice System Advisory Panel; 2018 Acts and Resolves  
14 No. 9, an act relating to racial equity in State government; 2013 Acts and  
15 Resolves No. 180, an act relating to a statewide policy on the use of and  
16 training requirements for electronic control devices; and 2017 Acts and  
17 Resolves No. 56, an act relating to the professional regulation of law  
18 enforcement officers by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council. The  
19 ongoing effort includes the work on S.338 (2020), an act relating to justice  
20 reinvestment, a data-driven approach to improve public safety, reduce criminal  
21 justice spending, and reinvest savings in strategies that can decrease crime and

1 reduce recidivism. Additionally, the legislative committees of jurisdiction  
2 continue to study law enforcement policies, training standards, and discipline,  
3 including accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law  
4 Enforcement Agencies within the next five years, and work on updating a  
5 model policy for the use of body cameras. Therefore, this act represents one  
6 step in the General Assembly’s ongoing effort to combat racial bias and  
7 increase transparency and accountability in policing. The General Assembly is  
8 committed to continually assessing the progress made by the State towards  
9 developing a system of public safety that is effective, equitable, and maintains  
10 the public trust and continuing its work to achieve that goal.

11 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that law enforcement agencies  
12 in Vermont use community policing strategies that develop collaborative  
13 partnerships between law enforcement and communities consistent with the  
14 pillars of 21st Century Policing as developed by President Obama’s Task Force  
15 on 21st Century Policing, adopt policies and practices that reflect a guardian  
16 mindset towards the citizens they serve, and establish a culture of transparency  
17 and accountability to promote public safety and foster public trust. To this  
18 end, it is the intent of the General Assembly that law enforcement use de-  
19 escalation strategies first and foremost before using force in every community-  
20 police interaction.

1        (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that it continue to work on the  
2        issues addressed in this bill, including when the 2020 legislative session  
3        reconvenes in August. Specifically, the General Assembly commits to  
4        working on:

5            (1) increasing the resources to and authority of the Executive Director of  
6        Racial Equity;

7            (2) resituating the Criminal Justice Training Council to the jurisdiction  
8        of the Department of Public Safety;

9            (3) evaluating the provisions of Sec. 6 of this act (law enforcement use  
10       of prohibited restraint), 13 V.S.A. § 2305, and 24 V.S.A. § 299 in consultation  
11       with interested stakeholders, including the Attorney General, the Executive  
12       Director of States Attorneys and Sheriffs, the Defender General, and the  
13       Executive Director of the Human Rights Commission, or their designees, and  
14       revising those provisions as appropriate;

15           (4) evaluating whether and how to gather data regarding the interactions  
16       between law enforcement and people with mental health issues;

17           (5) reviewing the Law Enforcement Advisory Board and ACLU model  
18       policies governing law enforcement use of body cameras in consultation with  
19       interested stakeholders, including the Vermont chapter of the American Civil  
20       Liberties Union, the Racial Disparities in the Criminal and Juvenile Justice

1 System Advisory Panel, and the Secretary of State, and developing a statewide  
2 policy for adoption prior to the effective date of Sec. 7 of this act; and

3 (6) considering recommendations that come forward through a process  
4 of meaningful community engagement, particularly with impacted,  
5 marginalized, and vulnerable communities.

6 \* \* \* Law Enforcement Race Data Collection \* \* \*

7 Sec. 2. 3 V.S.A. § 2222 is amended to read:

8 § 2222. POWERS AND DUTIES; BUDGET AND REPORT

9 \* \* \*

10 (k) The Secretary of Administration or designee shall review all grants  
11 from an agency of the State to a local law enforcement agency or constable,  
12 and all such grants shall be subject to the approval of the Secretary or designee.  
13 The Secretary or designee shall approve the grant only if the law enforcement  
14 agency or constable has complied with the race data reporting requirements set  
15 forth in 20 V.S.A. § 2366(e) within six months prior to the Secretary's or  
16 designee's review.

17 Sec. 3. SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION; NOTICE TO LAW

18 ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

19 On or before August 1, 2020, the Secretary of Administration shall issue a  
20 notice to all Vermont law enforcement agencies and constables that the  
21 provisions of 3 V.S.A. § 2222(k) become effective on January 1, 2021, and

1 that, beginning on that date, State grant funding for law enforcement shall be  
2 contingent on the agency or constable complying with the requirements of  
3 20 V.S.A. § 2366(e).

4 Sec. 4. 20 V.S.A. § 2366 is amended to read:

5 § 2366. LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES; FAIR AND IMPARTIAL  
6 POLICING POLICY; RACE DATA COLLECTION

7 \* \* \*

8 (e)(1) On or before September 1, 2014, every State, county, and municipal  
9 law enforcement agency shall collect roadside stop data consisting of the  
10 following:

11 (A) the age, gender, and race of the driver;

12 (B) the ~~reason~~ grounds for the stop;

13 (C) the grounds for the search and the type of search conducted, if  
14 any;

15 (D) the evidence located, if any; ~~and~~

16 (E) the outcome of the stop, including whether physical force was  
17 employed or threatened during the stop, and if so, the type of force employed  
18 and whether the force resulted in bodily injury or death, and whether:

19 (i) a written warning was issued;

20 (ii) a citation for a civil violation was issued;

21 (iii) a citation or arrest for a misdemeanor or a felony occurred; or

1 (iv) no subsequent action was taken.

2 (2) Law enforcement agencies shall work with the Executive Director of  
3 Racial Equity, the Criminal Justice Training Council, and a vendor chosen by  
4 the Council with the goals of collecting uniform data, adopting uniform storage  
5 methods and periods, and ensuring that data can be analyzed. Roadside stop  
6 data, as well as reports and analysis of roadside stop data, shall be public.

7 (3) On or before September 1, 2016 and annually thereafter, law  
8 enforcement agencies shall provide the data collected under this subsection to  
9 the Executive Director of Racial Equity and the vendor chosen by the Criminal  
10 Justice Training Council under subdivision (2) of this subsection or, in the  
11 event the vendor is unable to continue receiving data under this section, to the  
12 Council. Law enforcement agencies shall provide the data collected under this  
13 subsection in an electronic format specified by the receiving entity.

14 (4) The data provided pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection shall  
15 be posted electronically in a manner that is analyzable and accessible to the  
16 public on the receiving agency's website and clear and understandable. The  
17 receiving agency shall also report the data annually to the General Assembly.

18 (5) As used in this subsection, "physical force" shall refer to the force  
19 employed by a law enforcement officer to compel a person's compliance with  
20 the officer's instructions that constitutes a greater amount of force than  
21 handcuffing a compliant person.

1 (f) Nothing in this section is intended to prohibit or impede any public  
2 agency from complying with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and  
3 1644. To the extent any State or local law enforcement policy or practice  
4 conflicts with the lawful requirements of 8 U.S.C. §§ 1373 and 1644, that  
5 policy or practice is, to the extent of the conflict, abolished.

6 \*\*\* Prohibited Restraints; Unprofessional Conduct \*\*\*

7 Sec. 5. 20 V.S.A. chapter 151 (Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council),  
8 subchapter 2 is amended to read:

9 Subchapter 2. Unprofessional Conduct

10 § 2401. DEFINITIONS

11 As used in this subchapter:

12 (1) “Category A conduct” means:

13 (A) A felony.

14 (B) A misdemeanor that is committed while on duty and did not  
15 involve the legitimate performance of duty.

16 (C) Any of the following misdemeanors, if committed off duty:

17 (i) simple assault, second offense;

18 (ii) domestic assault;

19 (iii) false reports and statements;

20 (iv) driving under the influence, second offense;

1 (v) violation of a relief from abuse order or of a condition of  
2 release;

3 (vi) stalking;

4 (vii) false pretenses;

5 (viii) voyeurism;

6 (ix) prostitution or soliciting prostitution;

7 (x) distribution of a regulated substance;

8 (xi) simple assault on a law enforcement officer; or

9 (xii) possession of a regulated substance, second offense.

10 (2) “Category B conduct” means gross professional misconduct  
11 amounting to actions on duty or under ~~color of~~ authority of the State, or both,  
12 that involve willful failure to comply with a State-required policy or substantial  
13 deviation from professional conduct as defined by the law enforcement  
14 agency’s policy or if not defined by the agency’s policy, then as defined by  
15 Council policy, ~~such as~~ and shall include:

16 (A) sexual harassment involving physical contact or misuse of  
17 position;

18 (B) misuse of official position for personal or economic gain;

19 (C) excessive use of force under ~~color of~~ authority of the State,  
20 ~~second~~ first offense;

21 (D) biased enforcement; ~~or~~



1 (E) use of electronic criminal records database for personal, political,  
2 or economic gain;

3 (F) placing a person in a prohibited restraint;

4 (G) failing to intervene and report to a supervisor when the officer  
5 observes another officer placing a person in a prohibited restraint or using  
6 excessive force.

7 \* \* \*

8 (5) “Unprofessional conduct” means Category A, B, or C conduct.

9 \* \* \*

10 (7) “Prohibited restraint” means the use of any maneuver on a person  
11 that applies pressure to the neck, throat, windpipe, or carotid artery that may  
12 prevent or hinder breathing, reduce intake of air, or impede the flow of blood  
13 or oxygen to the brain.

14 \* \* \*

15 § 2407. LIMITATION ON COUNCIL SANCTIONS; FIRST OFFENSE OF

16 CATEGORY B CONDUCT

17 (a) Category B conduct; first offense. If a law enforcement agency  
18 conducts a valid investigation of a complaint alleging that a law enforcement  
19 officer committed a first offense of Category B conduct, the Council shall take  
20 no action, except that the Council may take action for a first offense under  
21 subdivision 2401(2)(C) (excessive use of force under authority of the State),

1 2401(2)(F) (placing a person in a prohibited restraint), or 2401(2)(G) (failing  
2 to intervene and report to a supervisor when an officer observes another officer  
3 placing a person in a prohibited restraint or using excessive force) of this  
4 chapter.

5 \* \* \*

6 Sec. 6. 13 V.S.A. § 1032 is added to read:

7 § 1032. LAW ENFORCEMENT USE OF PROHIBITED RESTRAINT

8 (a) As used in this section:

9 (1) “Law enforcement officer” shall have the same meaning as in 20  
10 V.S.A. § 2351a.

11 (2) “Prohibited restraint” means the use of any maneuver on a person  
12 that applies pressure to the neck, throat, windpipe, or carotid artery that may  
13 prevent or hinder breathing, reduce intake of air, or impede the flow of blood  
14 or oxygen to the brain.

15 (3) “Serious bodily injury” shall have the same meaning as in section  
16 1021 of this title.

17 (b) A law enforcement officer acting in the officer’s capacity as law  
18 enforcement who employs a prohibited restraint on a person that causes serious  
19 bodily injury to or death of the person shall be imprisoned for not more than 20  
20 years or fined not more than \$50,000.00, or both.

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\* \* \* Body Cameras \* \* \*

Sec. 7. 20 V.S.A. § 1818 is added to read:

§ 1818. EQUIPMENT OF OFFICERS WITH VIDEO RECORDING  
DEVICES

The Department shall ensure that every Department law enforcement officer  
who exercises law enforcement powers is equipped with a body camera or  
other video recording device on his or her person.

Sec. 8. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY; VIDEO RECORDING  
DEVICES; ONGOING COSTS

The Department of Public Safety shall immediately initiate the acquisition  
of video recording devices to comply with the requirements of 20 V.S.A.  
§ 1818. The ongoing costs of the devices that cannot be accommodated within  
the Department’s budget shall be included in the Department’s FY22 budget  
proposal to the General Assembly.

\* \* \* Repeals and Effective Dates \* \* \*

Sec. 9. REPEALS

- (a) 13 V.S.A. § 1032 (law enforcement use of prohibited restraint) is  
repealed on July 1, 2021.
- (b) 13 V.S.A. § 2305(3) (justifiable homicide) is repealed on July 1, 2021.

1       Sec. 10. EFFECTIVE DATES

2           (a) Sec. 2 (powers and duties; budget and report) of this act shall take effect  
3       on January 1, 2021.

4           (b) Sec. 5 (20 V.S.A. chapter 151) takes effect on September 1, 2020.

5           (c) Secs. 6 (law enforcement use of prohibited restraint) and 7 (equipment  
6       of officers with video recording devices) shall take effect on October 1, 2020.

7           (d) The remaining sections shall take effect on passage.

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11       (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE