June 11, 2020

Attorney General Donovan's Statement on Senate Government Operations Committee's Suggestions for Law Enforcement

As the Vermont Senate considers criminal justice reform measures, the Senate Government Operations Committee has compiled a list of potential measures to consider. My office is expected to testify on these measures tomorrow in the Committee. We will testify that it is time for Vermont to act. Here is what we will be advocating for:

Policies

I believe that Vermont should be reinvesting into communities and shrinking the footprint of law enforcement by funding access to health care, education, housing, and restorative justice practices. I support instituting alternative models of public safety and peacekeeping other than law enforcement.

I support the prohibition of no-knock warrants, chokeholds, and knee holds.

As indicated in the letter I sent to Legislature last week, I support H.808 which would heighten the standard of review in police use-of-force incidents. I believe law enforcement should be required to use body cameras and that severe consequences should be implemented if body cameras are turned off during interactions with the public. I support making all investigations into police conduct more transparent and open to the public, consistent with due

process rights, and I support releasing all video footage of police encounters including loss of life and police brutality after criminal investigations are completed.

Data

I support denying grants to law enforcement agencies if they fail to meet race data reporting requirements and having consistent data collection.

Training

As indicated in the letter I sent to the Legislature last week, [I support H.464](#) and charging the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council to develop statewide policies around use of force, de-escalation, and cross-cultural awareness. I support requiring training for law enforcement in mental health, de-escalation, and community relations.

Improper conduct

I support instituting severe consequences for police filing false reports and revoking certification if an officer is convicted of a crime.

Community outreach/relations

I am supportive of police not wearing military-style protective gear when on patrol or interacting with citizens. I also support using the Sequential Intercept Model to diffuse community gatherings.

Community advisory panels

I support having elected citizen review boards with robust oversight over police.

I look forward to continuing to work with the Legislature, BIPOC communities, law enforcement, and other stakeholders to find the best way forward to implement these reforms.

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