



Vermont Children's Alliance

Every Child, Every Time

Providing Support and Advocacy for Vermont's Child Advocacy Centers

On behalf of more than 230 police officers and deputies, represented by their Chiefs and Sheriffs, the Vermont Children's Alliance, and all of Vermont's Child Advocacy Centers:

We are happy to support elements of Bill S.285 including the implementation of a new interview modality that is legally sound, evidence-based, that will allow law enforcement to obtain permissible, voluntary confessions. It is important that threats and physical harm are not part of any interview or interrogation.

For the deception portion of the bill, we would request clarification on the following:

- How will this ban, if passed, impact undercover work, both in person and online?
- Promises of leniency - will this apply if police use discretion?
- Are there alternatives or exceptions that can be applied for sex crimes (or perhaps the Big 12) - Vermont has successfully demonstrated the use of deceptive techniques in several cases including *State v. Kolts* (2018).

Vermont already practices suppressing confessions that are problematic. We would like to take steps to implement an improved interview practice, prior to banning elements of current practice. We advocate to include the following:

1. Identify and create an alternative interview technique(s) with a committee that includes qualified interviewers in Vermont, nationwide and international practices that are legally sound, and evidence-based, by December 2024.
2. Mandate statewide training for the technique by December 2025.
3. Identify techniques for deception or misrepresentation that may be considered permissible and determine what, if any, additional legislative action is needed.

Sincerely,

Norma Hardy, Chief of Brattleboro Police
Braedon Vail, Chief of Barre City Police
Garth Christensen, Sgt. of Morristown Police
Joe Swanson, Chief of Woodstock Police
Derrick Tienken, Chief of Winhall Police
Matt Murano, Chief of Wilmington Police
Bill Daniels, Chief of Weathersfield Police
Daniel DesLauries, Lt. of Springfield Police
Loretta Stalnaker, Chief of Royalton Police
Greg Sheldon, Chief of Hartford Police
Thomas Williams, Chief of Chester Police
Jeffrey Billings, Chief of Ludlow Police
Mark Anderson, Windham County Sheriff
Ryan Palmer, Windsor County Sheriff

Marc Poulin, Washington County Sheriff
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