



DIVISION OF PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES
State of Connecticut

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Testimony of the Office of Chief Public Defender
Benedict R. Daigle, Assistant Public Defender

Committee on Judiciary – March 13, 2023
Raised S.B. 953 – An Act Concerning the Definition of Racial Profiling

The Office of Chief Public Defender (OCPD) supports **Raised S.B. 953 – An Act Concerning the Definition of Racial Profiling (LCO 3347)**, as the bill would appropriately modernize Connecticut’s definition of racial profiling to ensure that law enforcement units are not permitted to engage in racial profiling to any degree, except to apprehend a specific suspect whose racial or ethnic status is part of the description of the suspect.

OCPD is a longstanding member of the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project (CTRP3) Advisory Board.¹ OCPD concurs with the CTRP3 Advisory Board’s testimony, as submitted by the Hon. William Dyson, the Board’s chair – including the request that the proposed changes apply to both C.G.S. § 54-1l and C.G.S. § 54-1m.

This office highlights the Board’s conclusion:

By updating our statutory definition, we can continue to be a model for the country and fulfill our goal to eliminate racial profiling, use data to improve roadway safety and increase trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. A modernized definition will allow us to build upon our success and continue to work towards a more fair and just society.

OCPD urges passage of this legislation. Thank you.

¹ Additionally of note in this context, OCPD was the only public defense entity represented on any state team during the 2020-2021 *Learning Collaborative on State Strategies to Strengthen and Leverage Data to Address Impaired Driving*, hosted by the National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices and supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Mission Statement of the Division of Public Defender Services

Striving to ensure justice and a fair and unbiased system, the Connecticut Division of Public Defender Services zealously promotes and protects the rights, liberty and dignity of all clients entrusted to us.

We are committed to holistic representation that recognizes clients as individuals, fosters trust and prevents unnecessary and wrongful convictions.