

SB 880 - Public Comment 10/11/19 - Chief States Attorney Search

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Kacey Perkins <Kacey1987@gmail.com>

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To: ConnDCJ;

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To the Criminal Justice Commission,

My name is Kacey Perkins and I am a resident of Bridgeport, CT submitting public testimony with regard to the search for Connecticut's next Chief States Attorney.

In Kevin Kane's term as Chief States Attorney, residents throughout Connecticut have witnessed police officers engage in high speed chases, brutalizing and even killing members of our communities with little to no consequence. The opinion piece Kevin Kane wrote in August 2017 "Emboldened Juveniles Endanger the Public" was penned a mere three months after Bridgeport Police Officer James Boulay fatally shot 15 year old Jayson Negron. The officer was cleared of any wrong doing and left a family devastated at the loss of a child and the injustice of the constant violence police enact on our community members, disproportionately targeting black and brown youth. Since then, there have been numerous cases of police officers all over the state engaging in high speed chases that often end in fatalities, when it is against state regulation to do so. *The policy emphasizes that the safety of the general public, the officer, and the person being pursued must be of primary concern during a pursuit (CGA Sec 14-283a).* One must wonder why a Chief States Attorney would choose a period in time in which officers are harming and killing youth in Connecticut to write an editorial naming those same youth as aggressors when their lives are in fact endangered by the police officers the Chief States Attorney refuses to hold accountable.

I urge this commission to seek a Chief States Attorney who demonstrates an understanding of the history of racialized violence police departments have perpetuated for decades in this country. This is an opportunity to appoint someone to power who is committed to ending violence in our communities by holding those who cause harm accountable for their actions- especially when the offenders are armed and protected agents of the state. The people of Connecticut deserve a Chief States Attorney who will commit to working with community leaders in establishing a Special Prosecutor to investigate cases of officer misconduct. I thank the Criminal Justice Commission for the opportunity to submit public testimony in this search process and implore each of you responsible to use your position of power to select a Chief States Attorney who will publicly commit to work with community leaders to set a tone and standard for prosecutors to end mass incarceration and police violence throughout Connecticut and the nation as a whole.