

Sample Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 1071, An Act Concerning Deceptive or Coercive Interrogation Tactics

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

1: Introduction of yourself and (if applicable) your organization

2: Explanation of how your personal values align with ending the use of deceptive interrogation tactics on children by police. Some suggested statements:

- No one, adult or child, should be imprisoned because police coerced them into a false confession.
- To build an equitable future for all people in Connecticut, policymakers must reduce policing's responsibilities, scale, and tools.
- We should strive to ensure that confessions obtained by police are accurate and freely given.
- Deceptive interrogation tactics ultimately harm the people whom our state has made most vulnerable: people of color, children, and people with mental or physical disabilities.

3: Facts and data supporting ending deceptive interrogation: Feel free to reference the Deceptive Interrogation Fact Sheet or use some of the information below:

- Senate Bill 1071 would end the use of deceptive interrogation tactics by police against children by creating a judicial check on confessions if compelled through the knowing use of deception or other barred tactics by interrogators.
- Deceptive interrogation tactics by police frequently result in false confessions. At least 29 percent of Connecticut's wrongful convictions involve false confessions.
- Deceptive interrogation tactics by police were the cause of the wrongful convictions of the Central Park Five, where police falsely told the five teenagers that the others had implicated them in the crime.
- Youth are particularly threatened by deceptive interrogation tactics because parts of the brain that control future planning, judgment, and decision-making are not fully developed until a person reaches their mid-twenties.
- The Innocence Project found that of the 211 exonerees who were wrongfully convicted as children, 36 percent falsely confessed, whereas 10 percent of exonerees who were wrongfully convicted over the age of eighteen falsely confessed.
- Use of deceptive tactics like the Reid technique on children has led to an alarmingly high rate of false confessions among children, who are already at an increased risk for false confessions.

4: Conclude and ask for the committee to support the bill.

- The legislature must pass Senate Bill 1071 to prevent police deceptive interrogation tactics from hurting more children and costing our state further.