



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 953, An Act Concerning the
Definition of Racial Profiling**

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

My name is Jess Zaccagnino, and I am the policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am writing to testify in support of Senate Bill 953, An Act Concerning the Definition of Racial Profiling.

The ACLU-CT is committed to ending police violence and racism in policing in all forms. In addition to accountability measures, Connecticut must also divest from policing and reinvest in programs that build strong and safe communities. To build an equitable future for all people in Connecticut, policymakers must reduce policing's responsibilities, scale, and tools. Ensuring that our statutory definition of racial profiling is strong is one way to protect communities of color from overpolicing.

Senate Bill 953 was unanimously endorsed by the Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Project Advisory Board, of which the ACLU-CT is a member. The bill updates our 1999 definition of racial profiling to be more aligned with the rest of the country. When the 1999 statute was adopted, the prevailing definition of racial profiling was quite narrow, requiring disparate treatment "solely" on the basis of their racial or ethnic status. But states have moved away from the use of "solely," as it failed to encompass many cases of racial profiling. The definition proffered by this bill is the result of a review of legislation passed by other states over the last decade, which would modernize Connecticut statutes. As such, the ACLU-CT supports this bill, and encourages this Committee to do the same.