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May 7, 2021

Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 2 (Bradford) as amended April 29, 2021 - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Portantino:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 2**. This bill is scheduled for hearing before Senate Appropriations Committee on May 10, 2021.

This bill would help to improve public safety and protect marginalized communities. People with disabilities are disproportionately harmed by the use of force by law enforcement and have advocated for justice. After the murder of George Floyd in 2019, more disability organizations have risen up in solidarity with the Black community and other marginalized groups to call for police reforms.

The bill would establish reforms that would evaluate, disqualify and now decertify law enforcement officers in California. The bill would also reform the "Bane Act" by eliminating the application of certain governmental immunities, lowering the threshold for establishing a civil rights claim, and narrowly expanding standing to bring such claims.

Implicit bias by law enforcement against Black, Indigenous and people of color is real and must be addressed. Unfortunately, these biases extend to people with disabilities as well. Most implicit bias training only addresses

issues of race, however, that would be a missed opportunity. “Implicit biases against people with disabilities is one of the strongest implicit bias in our society. (Larson, 2008)” This is especially true for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It is important for us to consider how our natural or implicit biases toward certain individuals could affect how police think about and respond to people with various disabilities. These biases result in dangerous interactions that can lead to injury or death.¹

Disability Rights California supported SB 731 (Bradford) in 2020. As an organization, we have decided to lift up the voices of disabled people who have had negative experiences with law enforcement. Unfortunately, the overall impact cannot be calculated, because families and communities are damaged irreparably by these interactions. Holding law enforcement accountable makes communities safer and gives people a sense that they are being protected and served.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Eric Harris
Director of Public Policy
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Honorable Steven Bradford, California State Senate
Christopher Morales, Legislative Aide, Office of Senator Bradford

¹ Police Interactions with Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, Use of Force, Training and Implicit Biases, Alyssa Wright, Stanford Intellectual and Developmental Disability Law and Policy Project. <https://law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Alyssa-Wright-Police-Interactions-with-Individuals-with-Developmental-Disabilities-1.pdf>. 2015 [“Return to Main Document”](#)