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## Senate of Pennsylvania

April 23, 2021

Senator Lisa Baker  
312 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2089

Senator Steve Santarsiero  
184 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2089

RE: Chokehold Ban/Use of Force Standards (**SB142**)

Dear Senators Baker and Santarsiero:

Last session the Pennsylvania Senate voted unanimously to advance policy which prohibits the use of chokeholds and calls for expressed use of force policy for every law enforcement agency and training to that standard. Thank you for your support of the passage of this important measure.

This bill has been reintroduced this session as Senate Bill 142. The recent ruling convicting officer Chauvin of the murder of George Floyd using a blood choke, inconsistent with contemporary policing guidelines, underscores the need for reform. This bill defines a chokehold as any “physical maneuver that restricts an individual’s ability to breathe for the purposes of incapacitation.” Further, chokehold restraints are not consistent with good policing, as recognized by many officers around the commonwealth, and are prohibited by supporters of this measure: the PA Attorney General’s office and the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association. Increasingly, use of force policy has become a central talking point of advocates for responsible police reform. Having a standardized process for the more than 1,000 law enforcement agencies in Pennsylvania creates transparency and enhances relations between police and the communities they serve.

I am also proud to count the Pennsylvania’s District Attorneys Association, and the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police as supporters of this policy.

Last session the General Assembly unanimously passed crucial police reform legislation, but more work needs to be done. I urge you to call this bill up for a vote in the Judiciary Committee.

Regards,



**Senator Sharif Street**  
3<sup>rd</sup> District

CC: Senator Jake Corman  
Senator Kim Ward