

# Assembly passes bill to define use of force for police policies, require officers report excessive force

Posted on Tuesday, Jun 22, 2021

The Assembly today passed by voice vote a bill that would define use-of-force for police policies and require officers to report colleagues who use excessive force.

Lawmakers voted 60-38 to add an amendment to SB 120 that adjusted when officers are required to intervene in instances of excessive force and creates an effective date of Jan. 21, 2022. The bill originated in the Speaker's Task Force on Racial Disparities.

Task force co-chair Rep. Jim Steineke, R-Kaukauna, praised other task force co-chair Rep. Shelia Stubbs, D-Madison, for helping draft the bill, along with 17 other bills from the task force.

"This isn't the end, this is the beginning," Steineke said, referring to more progress on police policy overhaul bills. "I'm really looking forward to the recommendations coming out in the other subcommittees, education and economic development, because I think that might be as critical, if not more so than, the work we've already done."

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Steineke said the intent of the bill is to make sure officers who witness other officers using excessive force have a duty to intervene.

Stubbs said "this is good common-sense policy" she says should pass. "I am not happy about what happened," she said, referring to the bill's delay due to concerns raised by the Milwaukee Police Association.

“We should not continue to delay its passage in this body,” Stubbs added. “We must ensure that it reaches Governor Evers’ desk before the session is up, we don’t need another death across the state of Wisconsin.”

Bowen slammed the amendment for making it harder for police officers to be held accountable for their use of force.

Bowen added the amendment is “a last-minute change that will make it very much more difficult for us to have the officers that are our community’s reserve officers that will actually provide the accountability, and the service, the great service, that our community should be entitled to.”

The bill was originally scheduled for a floor vote last week, but it was pulled from the calendar over concerns about defining what constitutes the use of force.

It now heads back to the Senate.