

# Senate Judiciary Committee

*Jennifer Horgan 271-7875*

**HB 530**, relative to candidate background checks for law enforcement officers.

**Hearing Date:** March 23, 2021

**Time Opened:** 2:56 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 3:03 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Carson, Gannon, French, Whitley and Kahn

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill allows an employer to share certain information with a law enforcement agency about a candidate for a position as a peace officer or other position within a law enforcement agency.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Dolan

Rep. T. Lekas

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**Who supports the bill:** Chief Andrew Shagoury, NH Association of Chiefs of Police; Maddie Daniel; Hunter Porter, New Hampshire High School Democrats; Elizabeth Sargent, NH Association of Chiefs of Police; Sara Johnson; Bret Ingold; Vinnie Baiocchetti; James Valiquet; Charles Reynolds; Steve Monier; Benjamin Sargent; Mark Chase; Christopher Moore; David Bates; Elizabeth Fenner-Lukaitis; Ronald Garnett; Ruth Larson; Nicole Fordey; Richard DeMark; Cheryl Gibbons; April Ingram

**Who opposes the bill:** No One

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

**Chief Shagoury** (Association of Chiefs of Police)

- This is similar to the language in SB92 that is already passed with two differences.
- One, this language talks about ‘applicant’ vs ‘candidate’
- Two, in this bill the language is placed under RSA 41:9-c, and in SB92 it is under RSA 106-L:17.
- Senator Kahn raised concerns about how this can be mandatory on a previous employer, as it seems to be setting up a conflict with privacy agreements and with out of state employers.

**Hunter Porter** (NH High School Democrats)

- This bill is a commonsense policy that will allow law enforcement agencies to practice more discretion over who they hire, improving the quality of our police forces.

- Completing this type of background check will stop problems before they start by making sure those put in power have integrity.
- Police are trusted with multiple high stress jobs and it is important that they are confidently able to handle those tasks.
- Information from previous employers reveals much more than a criminal background check can.
- Using background checks like these can potentially save money for municipalities because when police have engaged in misconduct in the past costly lawsuits have been brought forward.
- This legislation would also benefit everyday citizens by having them know that police departments have completed comprehensive background checks of their officers, building trust in our police forces.
- This bill is not disruptive and does nothing but expand access to information for law enforcement agencies.

**Summary of testimony presented in opposition:**

None

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Date Hearing Report completed: March 23, 2021