

**REV. JOHN W. EATON
21 UPPER MILE POINT DRIVE SUITE 310
MEREDITH, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03253**

June 25, 2020

Attorney General Gordon McDonald
NH Department of Justice
33 Capitol Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Attorney General McDonald:

I write to you as a former law enforcement officer (U.S. Customs Service Inspector and Special Agent) to comment on a concern I witnessed too often. I hope your new commission to examine police training and procedures in NH will consider my concern and suggestion for mitigation.

I understand all potential police officers in NH are given a mental health evaluation before being certified. This is excellent, but it does not go far enough. As an officer I saw good dedicated officers deteriorate mentally over time. Some come to see every civilian as an enemy. One told me, "Everybody is violating the law. Our job is to determine what law they are violating." Others become cynical and decide if criminals can get away with illegal acts, the officers will join them by illegally enhancing evidence to bolster their cases.

While recent police/civilian interactions that have made the news have focused on the color divide, having been an insider I can see where my concerns may have been in play.

I suggest all police officers be given a routine yet intensive mental health fitness evaluation every five years, more often if a reason can be articulated. Make it law if need be so the unions cannot negotiate it away. That only benefits bad officers. Such a routine evaluation will help protect the integrity of good officers and police forces in general, allow officers who have deteriorated to get the mental health care they need before, hopefully, returning to work and prevent unfortunate police overreaction and illegal activity like that which has recently made the news.

I hope your commission will consider seriously my suggestion.

Sincerely,

