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House Bill 351

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 351 would ensure that police officers, who stand as the first line of defense in our communities, are afforded protection of their civil liberties that they deserve when faced with unproven allegations or threatened with retaliation for doing their job.

House Bill 351 requires an accused officer to receive a due process hearing, where an accusation must be proven by clear and convincing evidence, before a police officer's certificate is revoked. The Police Standards Commission would be able to suspend a certificate prior to a hearing, but revocation, which can be a career ending action, would be allowed only after serious misconduct has been proven. Also, prohibits suspension, revocation or refusal to issue a certificate based on a previous disciplinary action that has been reversed.

The bill also helps protect the officer and their family from an escalation of the on-the-job harassment or threats by keeping personally identifying information such as the officer's photo and home address confidential, except in certain circumstances.

Additionally, HB 351 allows an officer to refuse to take a lie detector test and protects that officer for retaliation for that action.

Court officers, who carry weapons, can arrest people, and serve warrants, would be added to the definition of "police officer" by HB 351. This change ensures that they meet the same high standards, receive the same training, and have the same protections provided to police officers.