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Assembly California Legislature

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AB 1196 – Carotid Artery Restraints

PURPOSE

Assembly Bill 1196 seeks to eliminate the use of carotid artery restraints statewide by law enforcement.

BACKGROUND

The carotid restraint is one of the most commonly used strangleholds. To perform this hold, a peace officer applies pressure on either side of the windpipe—but not on the windpipe itself—to slow or stop the flow of blood to the brain via the carotid arteries.

While designed to render subjects unconscious, this hold can go wrong in two main ways: either when improperly applied, or when a subjects' physical disposition—if they suffers from coronary artery disease, for example—makes the hold dangerous or lethal. Simply maintaining restricted blood flow for one minute after the suspect is rendered unconscious can lead to irreversible brain damage.

With the high profile death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, where a peace officer used his knee to subdue and detain him, it is clear that similar methods of restraining suspects are incredibly risky and should no longer be allowed. Police Departments in several major cities such as San Diego and Los Angeles have already taken steps to prohibit their use but statewide policies regarding neck restraints can vary greatly between departments, which results in a lack of accountability for officers who use them.

AB 1196 will create a uniform statewide policy on carotid restraints and ensure that this procedure can no longer be improperly applied on Californians.

SUPPORT

N/A

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SUMMARY

Office of Assemblymember Mike A. Gipson