

Good afternoon. My name is Isabelle Leyva. For the past 4 years, I have led the NYCLU's protest monitoring program, through which we have documented police conduct at protests for 4 years.

I have testified to this Council many times about why the SRG must be disbanded, as have hundreds of New Yorkers who have taken days off of work to be in this room and relive trauma inflicted on them by this unit. For two years, this very hearing room has been packed with community members begging City Council to take action on this issue.

What I want to emphasize today is that no matter how many hearings we hold about this unit, how many lawsuits the SRG is involved in, and how much scrutiny the SRG is under, this unit continues to brutalize New Yorkers with impunity.

As long as this unit exists, it will continue to brutalize New Yorkers. That's because you cannot reform a unit that was created to silence dissent. You cannot reform a unit that is trained to target racial justice protesters. You cannot reform a unit that is designed to treat our community members like enemy combatants. You cannot reform a unit whose entire function is to deploy militarized tactics on our neighbors.

Over the last few months, the SRG has led a violent crack-down on pro-palestine protests across our city. Only 2 weeks ago, the SRG trapped and brutalized dozens of non-violent protesters, arresting more than 30. They then attacked people at jail support who were waiting for the release of arrestees at 1 Police Plaza. They slammed someone so hard into the pavement that they began to have a seizure in the middle of a roadway as witnesses screamed for medical attention. Earlier that day, the SRG knocked a protester unconscious while making mass arrests. Footage shows the NYPD handcuffing the person as they lay unconscious face-down in the street. Multiple people were hospitalized that day for injuries.

This is what the SRG is. This is what the unit was designed to do. The only way to put an end to this unit's violence is to put an end to the unit itself. Disband the SRG and reinvest its \$133 Million in funds back into our communities. Anything short of that is a failure to protect the safety

& First Amendment rights of New Yorkers.