

COMMUNITIES
UNITED FOR
POLICE
REFORM

June 23, 2020

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Speaker Corey Johnson
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

NYC Councilmembers
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio, New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson & NYC Councilmembers:

On April 30, many of the signers of this letter wrote to the Mayor & Speaker because we were alarmed by Mayor de Blasio's FY21 executive budget – which proposes cuts for many of the City's crucial programs, services & infrastructure -- while largely protecting the NYPD's bloated, nearly \$6 billion FY21 expense budget. We called on you to cut the NYPD FY21 expense budget (including defunding the NYPD's role in homeless services, schools, youth programs, mental health response and other social services) and redirect those savings to infrastructure, programs & services that will be crucial to equitable COVID-19 recovery for Black, Latinx and other communities of color.

Since that time, our campaign to #DefundNYPD for #NYCBudgetJustice has only grown. We are pleased that Speaker Johnson and others within the City Council have [signaled](#) that they hear the movement's call to cut the NYPD's bloated FY21 expense budget by at least \$1 billion, and redirect those and related monies to life-saving and life-affirming programs in Black, Latinx and other communities of color. On the other hand, Mayor de Blasio has publicly rejected the idea of cutting the NYPD budget by at least \$1 billion – even though the NYPD budget has grown by more than \$1 billion under his administration.

As we near the June 30th deadline for NYC to adopt a city budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1, 2020, we want to be clear that **the movement's call for you to cut at least \$1 billion directly from the NYPD's bloated, almost \$6 billion FY21 expense budget will not be satisfied by fuzzy math or musical budget chairs.** Moving cops from the NYPD to other agencies will not decrease police violence or yield monies that can be reinvested in communities. Falsely claiming fringe and pension costs¹ as part of the \$1 billion we are calling for to be cut from the NYPD FY21 expense budget will be seen as the fuzzy, misleading math it is. Our call for you to cut at least \$1 billion directly from the NYPD FY21 expense budget is the floor, not the ceiling.

¹ Most NYC agencies (including the NYPD's almost \$6 billion agency expense budget), do not include fringe and pension costs in their agency expense budgets. Those costs are accounted for in a budget that is separate from departmental budgets. Cutting the NYPD FY21 budget by at least \$1 billion will automatically yield additional savings in fringe, pension and other non-NYPD budget areas. We are calling for ALL of the related savings (at least \$1B in cuts to the NYPD budget + savings in other budget areas), be redirected to fund crucial community programs and services. This could amount to a total of over \$2 billion in savings in the City budget that can be redirected to communities.

This is a moment for decisive, moral action rooted in a clear understanding of history, structural racism and systemic inequality. **The pandemic has starkly revealed and exacerbated every measure of inequality in New York City**, including abusive policing in communities of color. It's not surprising that Black, Latinx and other communities of color have been hit hardest by the devastation of coronavirus-related deaths, COVID-19 infections, loss of employment and income, lack of stable housing, food insecurity, and brutal police violence during the pandemic. **NYC government has largely defunded key needs in Black, Latinx and other communities of color for years, while taxpayer dollars to policing has only grown.**

One of the lessons the City should take from the current pandemic is that **safety for all New Yorkers is possible only when there are strong, accessible, and culturally competent citywide systems and infrastructure that center the needs of low-income Black, Latinx and other communities of color.** We should understand that safety for all is possible only with strong public health systems (including mental health), housing for all, quality education, school environments that center the holistic needs of young people, environmental justice, food justice, transportation justice, disability justice, protections for workers, and all of the additional elements needed for robust citywide infrastructure that guarantees the basic needs of all residents to thrive.

The safest communities are those with the most resources, not those with the most police. No amount of police officers, police training, body worn cameras, or police funding will ever provide the basis for communities to survive and thrive.

New Yorkers are calling for at least \$1 billion to be cut directly from the NYPD's bloated almost \$6 billion FY21 expense budget, and for all related and additional savings to be redirected to crucial services, programs and infrastructure in Black, Latinx and other communities of color.

The 170+ organizations sending this letter are calling on you to:

- 1. Cut *AT LEAST* \$1 billion directly from the NYPD's bloated, non-transparent, almost \$6 billion FY21 expense budget and redirect all related and additional savings to core needs in Black, Latinx and other NYC communities of color.** This must include eliminating the role of the NYPD in social services and schools so that those funds can be used to support NYC communities to help ensure an equitable recovery in the pandemic, instead of criminalization and policing.
- 2. Deny & cancel any new policing-related initiatives and related budget increases in the NYPD's FY21 expense budget.** This includes cancelling the misguided "ambassador" program in the NYPD, recently announced by the Mayor. The City can't afford to let the NYPD continue to create new public relations initiatives while our public health infrastructure, core programs and social safety net don't adequately meet the survival needs of Black, Latinx and other communities of color.
- 3. Require increased NYPD budget transparency through terms & conditions on the NYPD budget,** including disclosure of private outside donations to the NYPD of \$5,000 or more per

year, with detailed itemization of expenses paid through private sources; and requirements for more detailed NYPD units of appropriation to decrease the secrecy of the NYPD's bloated budget in future years.

We are in an historic moment in NYC and nationally. We are calling on you to act with moral and historical clarity, to put aside politics, and to demonstrate leadership by cutting the NYPD's FY21 expense budget by at least \$1 billion and redirect all related and additional savings to non-police infrastructure, programs and services for Black, Latinx and other communities of color.

Signed,

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| Communities United for Police Reform (CPR) | Citizen Action of New York |
| Alliance for Educational Justice | Classic Stage Company |
| Alliance for Quality Education | Clemente Soto Velez Cultural & Education Center |
| Amas Musical Theatre | Clubbed Thumb |
| Apogee Journal | The Coalition for Behavioral Health |
| Arab American Association of New York | College Access: Research & Action |
| Asian American Federation | Color of Change |
| Audre Lorde Project | Common Cause/New York |
| Bronx Defenders | Community for a Cause |
| Brooklyn Anti-Gentrification Network | Community Healthcare Network |
| Brooklyn Defender Services | Community Service Society |
| Brooklyn Movement Center | Community Voices Heard |
| Brooklyn NAACP | Congregation Beth Elohim Dismantling Racism Team |
| Brotherhood/Sister Sol | Correctional Association of New York |
| The Bushwick Starr | CUNY CLEAR |
| CAAAY Organizing Asian Communities | Defending Rights & Dissent |
| Campaign for NY Health | Desis Rising Up & Moving |
| Campaign Zero | Drug Policy Alliance |
| Center for Anti-Violence Education | El Punete |
| Center for Appellate Litigation | Empire State Indivisible |
| Center for Community Alternatives | Equality for Flatbush |
| Center for Constitutional Rights | Expanded Schools |
| Center for Family Life | Faith In New York |
| Center for Frontline Retail | Families for Freedom |
| Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar | FIERCE |
| Evers College | The Fines and Fees Justice Center |
| Center for NuLeadership on Human Justice & Healing | Food Bank For New York City |
| Center for Popular Democracy | The Foundry Theatre |
| Chinese-American Planning Council | Gathering for Justice /Justice League NYC |
| Churches United for Fair Housing | |

Girls for Gender Equity
Global Action Project
GMHC
GOLES
Good Shepherd Services
Greenwich House
HANAC Inc.
Harm Reduction Coalition
HERE
The Hetrick-Martin Institute
Housing Justice For All
Housing Works
Human Services Council
Human.NYC
Immigrant Defense Project
Indivisible Harlem
Interfaith Center of New York
Jewish Voices for Peace
Jews for Racial & Economic Justice
Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club
Justice Committee
JustLeadershipUSA
Katal Center for Health, Equity & Justice
Korean American Family Service Center
Korean Queer Transgender Network of NYC
(KQTxNYC)
Latin American Theater Experiment Associates
Law Enforcement Action Partnership
Legal Action Center
Legal Aid Society
LGBT Faith Leaders of African Descent
LIFE Camp
Literacy Assistance Center
Ma-Yi Theater Company
Mabou Mines
Make the Road NY
Malcolm X Grassroots Movement
May Day Space
Mixteca Organization, Inc
MomsRising
Move Forward Staten Island
The Movement Theatre Company

MPOWER Change
NAACP Legal Defense Fund
NAACP New York State Conference
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) -
NYC
National Black Theatre Inc.
National Pan-Hellenic Council - NYC
Nature's Darlings
Neighbors Together
The Network: Supportive Housing Network of
New York
New Economy Project
New Georges Theater
New Kings Democrats
New Ohio Theatre
New Women Space
New York Appleseed
New York City Anti-Violence Project
New York Civil Liberties Union
New York Communities for Change
New York Immigration Coalition
New York Theatre Workshop
New York Working Families Party
Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson
North Star Fund
New York City Environmental Justice Alliance
The New Group
OCA - New York Chapter
OutRight Action International
The Peace Poets
Peoples Climate Movement-NY
Performance Space New York
Physicians for a National Health Program - NY
Metro
PlayCo
Playwrights Horizons
Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn
College
Primary Stages
Public Science Project
Red Hook Initiative

Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP)
Campaign
Riders Alliance
Rise & Resist
Rising Ground
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Rockaway Youth Task Force
Safety Net Project, Urban Justice Center
Sapna NYC
Showing Up for Racial Justice - NYC
Signature Theatre
Sister Diaspora for Liberation
Soho Repertory Theatre
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship &
Training (SAFEST)
St. Ann's Warehouse
St. James Presbyterian Church
Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center
Take On Hate
TakeRoot Justice
Tandem Otter Productions

Target Margin Theater
This Is Not A Theatre Company
Transgender Law Center
TREEage
Trinity Lutheran Church, Sunset Park
Ugnayan Youth for Justice and Social Change
UPROSE
Urban Justice Center
Village Independent Democrats
Vineyard Theatre
Violence Intervention Program
Vision Urbana, Inc
VOCAL-NY
Witness
Women & Justice Project
Women Creating Change
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
Yalla Brooklyn
Youth Action Programs and Homes
Youth Represent

cc: NYC Comptroller Stringer
NYC Public Advocate Williams