



District of Columbia Government  
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A  
Box 75115  
Washington, DC 20013



June 14, 2020

The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 402  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Re: Support for Mayor's budget proposal for Metropolitan Police Department ("MPD") and opposition to efforts to defund MPD

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of the D.C. Council:

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting<sup>1</sup> on June 11, 2020, our Commission voted 7-0-0 (with 5 Commissioners required for a quorum) to express our support for the Mayor's proposal to provide a modest budget increase for the Metropolitan Police Department ("MPD") and to express our unanimous opposition to recent calls to defund MPD. We believe a fully-staffed MPD and a well-trained department are essential tenets of a safe and just community.

The Commission's unanimous support for maintaining existing funding for MPD is based both on the need for MPD to play an important role in public safety and also on our concern that an insufficiently funded police department would be counterproductive to the goal of improving community relations with MPD. Defunding MPD would make it less likely the Department could hire and retain the best, brightest, and most ethical officers or that the Department would be able to provide expensive, but necessary training in nonviolent response, implicit bias, and other trainings necessary to help ensure that MPD is as progressive and antiracist as possible and that they are able to work to do their part to help ensure that black lives matter here in D.C. Our opposition is also based on our concern that MPD needs to have sufficient resources to allow for continued safe, peaceful First Amendment protests in the District in order to help prevent another response like the one that federal officials produced around Lafayette Park.

MPD provides key services to our community's diverse residents and our Commission appreciates the strong, customer service oriented leadership to the officers who serve in the First District and Fifth District. Adequate staffing allows MPD to provide additional resources to our community during the Summer Crime Initiative, which serves the Rosedale community in ANC6A and which has been critical in helping reduce violence and homicides along Benning Road, NE. Our Commission requests that MPD retain funding to continue to provide equivalent personnel to both the First and Fifth Districts and to the Summer Crime Initiative next year. We believe that sufficient funding for MPD is critical to ensure that MPD continues to train its officers in areas of progressive policing, implicit bias, de-escalation and other safe police tactics, and in policing in racially diverse communities.

The Commission also supports efforts to improve mental health, housing, and violence interruption and prevention services to help ensure better outcomes for those in crisis and to help reduce the burden on the police department to respond to the needs of those individuals experiencing health and housing crises. Our MPD and FEMS responders are all too often the only agencies willing to respond to the around the clock crises and needs that arise in D.C. Our Commission is grateful for

the men and women at MPD who respond to these calls and encourages other agencies to step up to do their part to help serve those in crisis and to help prevent those crises as well.

Please be advised that Commissioners Marie-Claire Brown, Mike Soderman, Phil Toomajian, and I are authorized to act on behalf of ANC6A for the purposes of this matter. Thank you for considering our views as you finalize the budget for the forthcoming fiscal year and for your commitment to public safety and to racial equality and progress.

On Behalf of the Commission,



Amber Gove

Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A

cc: Members of the D.C. Council, Mayor Muriel Bowser, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice Kevin Donahue, Chief of Police Peter Newsham

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<sup>1</sup> ANC 6A meetings are advertised electronically on the [anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc6a-announce@yahoogroups.com), [anc6a@yahoogroups.com](mailto:anc6a@yahoogroups.com), and [newhilleast@groups.io](mailto:newhilleast@groups.io), at [www.anc6a.org](http://www.anc6a.org), and through print advertisements in the Hill Rag