

Timothy Mygatt, Lead Investigator

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Special Litigation Section

61 D Street, NW Room 5907A

Washington, D.C. 20004

Attn: @207-35-15

September 9, 2016

We are members of the Campaign for Justice, Safety, and Jobs (“CJSJ”), a coalition of over 30 organizations representing local and national youth leaders, policy advocates, civil rights organizations, law enforcement, and labor unions. CJSJ formed over a year ago in the wake of the Baltimore police in-custody death of Freddie Gray, an unarmed Black man. Since then, we have created and advanced policing reforms and economic solutions to improve the quality of life of Baltimore City residents.

As community leaders, we believe that policing in Baltimore will never truly be reformed, nor police-community trust established, until the current systems of accountability allow for and encourage robust civilian participation and oversight of the Baltimore City Police Department. To that end, civilians must also play critical oversight roles in the negotiation and monitoring of any agreement between the City of Baltimore and the Department of Justice. We believe that the following provisions should be included in any consent decree or other agreement:

- 1) **The consent decree must include a provision requiring that the monitoring team selected and agreed upon by the parties will be required to contract with community-based groups to regularly solicit community feedback through structured interviews about police citizen contacts throughout the monitoring process.** This will be critical to rebuilding community trust and ensuring that reforms or system changes at the department level are not implemented until their impact is felt at the community level.
- 2) **The consent decree must include a transparent monitor selection process including robust community input through public hearings or forums at which the monitor candidates present their qualifications, and at which members of the public have a chance to ask questions, and provide feedback to the city and DOJ about the candidates.**
- 3) **The Statement of Principles released earlier last month must be modified to include specific language requiring civilian oversight**

throughout the consent decree negotiation, monitoring, and implementation of reforms.

In addition, we ask that:

- 4) Once an agreement is reached between Baltimore City and the Department of Justice, the parties include a public comment period and a public hearing before the Federal Judge to receive and consider community feedback before the consent decree is approved.**

Baltimore needs effective community policing and law enforcement that upholds equal justice and protects public safety by ensuring community accessibility, transparency, and accountability. The systemic barriers to justice, identified in the April 10th findings letter by the Department of Justice, will never be addressed until the Baltimore City Police Department makes an intentional decision to re-orient itself in language, practice and policy of police as protectors, partners and fellow community members, rather than antagonists. No individual or collective body can measure the extent to which Baltimore's policing systems have been reformed better than our city's residents themselves.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Department of Justice and the City of Baltimore toward systemic police reforms that promote transparency, accountability, and true community policing. Please don't hesitate to contact us to discuss these requests in further detail at ealex@wearecasa.org

CJSJ members include:

1199 SEIU, ACLU of Maryland, Amnesty International, Baltimore Algebra Project, Beats, Rhymes, and Relief, Baltimore United for Change, CASA, Citibloc, Communities United, Council on American-Islamic Relations, Equity Matters, Empowerment Temple, Freddie Gray Project, Fusion Group, Jews United for Justice, Justice League, Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle, Making Change, Maryland State Conference NAACP, No Boundaries Coalition, Peace by Piece, Pleasant Hope Baptist Church, Power Inside, SEIU 32BJ, Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), Southern Engagement Foundation, Ujima People's Progress, and Universal Zulu Nation.