August 25, 2020

Hon. Bill de Blasio  
Mayor  
City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson  
Speaker  
New York City Council  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dermot Shea  
Commissioner  
New York City Police Department  
One Police Plaza  
New York, NY 10038

All NYC Council Members  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Johnson, Commissioner Shea and NYC Council Members:

The undersigned non-profit social service and social justice organizations represent and serve low-income communities of color throughout New York City. For years, we have both personally witnessed, and advocated against, the disparities in treatment of residents of communities of color by members of the New York City Police Department.

Over the past several months, the outrage that we have always felt has now spread throughout New York City, as amply shown by the many peaceful street demonstrations that have occurred. While we are saddened that it has taken the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and others to bring the issue of racist and unjust policing to the forefront, we are also inspired by having so many New Yorkers joining us in calling for an end to these practices.

We acknowledge that a few small steps have been taken on this issue – such as opening up police disciplinary records, banning chokeholds and affirming the public’s right to record police activity – but these minimal changes were long overdue, and will do little to change what is occurring every day in our communities.

Here is the reality: Substantial systemic changes are needed, and they are needed now.

Attached is the REFORM NYPD NOW agenda, which is a list of reforms that must be taken right away. We are asking each of you to publicly state your position on these reforms, as well as the steps you intend to take to implement the reforms that you support.

The REFORM NYPD NOW agenda starts with an acknowledgement of the NYPD’s history of mistreatment of communities of color, and a pledge to institute the changes needed to end that practice. There can be no reform if that past history of discriminatory treatment continues to be denied.

The agenda also proposes changes along a broad spectrum of areas – from police officer hiring and training practices, to how officers interact with the public, to the process for disciplining officers who engage in misconduct, and much more.

The listed reforms are not new, and they are not hard. Together, they will set the stage for fundamentally improving the relationship between the NYPD and the communities it serves. All that is needed is the will of our government leaders to adopt these reforms.
Two important points:

First, the REFORM NYPD NOW agenda does not purport to be a solution to the problem of the disparate treatment of communities of color. Instead, it focuses solely on the most urgently needed changes to NYPD policing structures, tactics and policies, and is just one component within a broader array of systemic reforms required to eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in housing, education, health care, employment, law enforcement and other areas. Nor does the package take a position on the appropriate amount of funding for the NYPD budget.

Second, while we strongly condemn racist policing, past and present, we do not condemn all police officers, individually or collectively. To the contrary, because our organizations are embedded in communities of color, we understand well the important role that police officers play in helping to keep our neighborhoods safe, and we often work side by side with dedicated officers of all races, ethnicities, religions and genders to achieve that goal.

But the hard work and good intentions of these dedicated officers has been completely undermined by the actions of officers who mistreat people of color, resulting in the deep chasm of distrust that now exists.

Bridging that chasm is the most important and urgent task that we face, and it starts with implementing the proposed reforms.

We are asking each of you, by Wednesday, September 9, 2020, to: (1) publicly state whether you support or oppose each of the items in the REFORM NYPD NOW agenda; and (2) set forth the specific steps that you will take to implement those reforms, including your timetable for doing so. Please provide your response by emailing David Nocenti, Executive Director of Union Settlement, at dnocenti@unionsettlement.org.

We hope that you will join us is cause, and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Cheryl F. Dudley
Regional Executive Minister
American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan
New York

Therese R. Rodriguez
Chief Executive Officer
Apicha Community Health Center

Gretchen Buchenholz
Founder and Executive Director
Association to Benefit Children

Bishop Carlton T. Brown
Senior Pastor & Chairman
Bethel Gospel Assembly, Inc.

Stephen Tosh
Executive Director
Boys’ Club of New York

Muzzy Rosenblatt
CEO and President
BRC

Ellen Baxter
Executive Director
Broadway Housing Communities

Christopher Watler
Chief External Affairs Officer
Center for Employment Opportunities
Annetta Seecharran
Executive Director
Chhaya Community Development Corporation

Phoebe C. Boyer
President and CEO
Children’s Aid Society

Sharon Content
Founder and President
Children of Promise, NYC

Abraham Jones
Executive Director
Claremont Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Janice Bloom & Lori Chajet
Co-Directors
College Access: Research & Action (CARA)

Rubén Austria
Executive Director
Community Connections for Youth

Rose Duhan
President and CEO
Community Health Care Association of NYS

Robert Hayes
President and CEO
Community Healthcare Network

Maria Contreras Collier
Executive Director
Cypress Hills Child Care Corporation

Charles D. Chenet
Founder and Executive Director
Dare2Draw

Elisa Istueta
Executive Director
Directions For Our Youth

Dorothy Calvani and Mali Trilla
Co-Chairs
East Harlem Community Health Committee

Jeff Ginsburg
Chief Executive Officer
EHTP & East Harlem Scholars Academies

Celia Ramirez
President
East River North Renewal HDFC

Alan van Capelle
President and CEO
Educational Alliance

Julio Medina
President and CEO
Exodus Transitional Community

William Weisberg
Executive Director
Forestdale

JoAnne Page
President and CEO
The Fortune Society

Dr. Jocelynne Rainey
President and CEO
Getting Out and Staying Out/Stand Against Violence East Harlem

Roderick Jones
Executive Director
Goddard Riverside

Michelle Yanche
Executive Director
Good Shepherd Services

Robert Cordero
Executive Director
Grand Street Settlement

Natalie Martinez
Director of Youth Employment Programs
HANAC Inc.

Chris Norwood
Executive Director
Health People

Walter Roberts
Executive Director
Hope Community

Ken Jockers
Executive Director
Hudson Guild
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Hanway</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement</td>
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<td>Rachel Williams</td>
<td>Director of Marketing, Outreach &amp; Advocacy</td>
<td>Joseph P. Addabbo Family Health Center</td>
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<td>Margaret Della</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Kingsbridge Heights Community Center</td>
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<td>Reada Edelstein</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>Damyn Kelly, J.D.; PhD</td>
<td>President and CEO</td>
<td>Lutheran Social Services of NY</td>
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<td>Fred Riccardi</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Medicare Rights Center</td>
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<td>Rev. Dr. Alfreda Griffin-Johnson</td>
<td>Outreach Minister</td>
<td>Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church</td>
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<td>Jack Doyle</td>
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<td>New Settlement Apartments</td>
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<td>Maria Lizardo</td>
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<td>AiLun Ku</td>
<td>President and CEO</td>
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<td>Ben Thomases</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<td>Rachel Cytron</td>
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<td>Lucy Herz</td>
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<td>Judith Zangwill</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Sunnyside Community Services</td>
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<td>Gregory J. Morris</td>
<td>President and Executive Director</td>
<td>Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center</td>
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<td>Lakythia Ferby</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>STRIVE New York</td>
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<td>David Nocenti</td>
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<td>Kimberly Williams</td>
<td>President and CEO</td>
<td>Vibrant Emotional Health</td>
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<td>Christine Quinn</td>
<td>President and CEO</td>
<td>Women In Need (Win)</td>
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<td>Sharon Greenberger</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO</td>
<td>YMCA of Greater New York</td>
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<td>Diana Breen</td>
<td>Interim President and CEO</td>
<td>Young Audiences New York</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert T. Taylor</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Youth Action Programs and Homes</td>
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cc:  Attorney General Letitia James
    NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer
    NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
    Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark
    Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez
    Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance, Jr.
    Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz
    Staten Island District Attorney Michael E. McMahon
REFORM NYPD NOW AGENDA

Set forth below is a list of recommended actions that must be taken immediately to help address current deficiencies in the way that the NYPD treats communities of color.

A. Pledge to Reform

1. The Mayor and Police Commissioner should: (1) publicly acknowledge and apologize for NYPD’s history of disparate treatment of persons of color; and (2) pledge to institute systemic reforms, including those noted below.

B. Reduce Police Officer Misconduct and Excessive Use of Force

1. Update all use-of-force policies to clearly set forth the maximum use of force allowable in response to specific types of conduct (*)
2. Require officers to de-escalate situations to the greatest extent possible before using force (*)(†)
3. Require police officers to exhaust all other reasonable alternatives before resorting to deadly force (*)(†)
4. Require officers to give a clear verbal warning, when possible, and give people a reasonable amount of time to comply with the warning before using deadly force (*)
5. Prohibit shooting at a moving vehicle, unless threatened with deadly force other than the vehicle (*)
6. Require officers to provide comprehensive reporting of all uses of force and threats of use of force (*)
7. Establish a “duty to intervene” for all police officers witnessing misconduct by another police officer, including but not limited to excessive use of force (*)(†)
8. Provide whistleblower protections for officers who report misconduct by another officer (†)

C. Strengthen the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB)

1. Eliminate Police Commissioner review of CCRB recommended sanctions, thereby providing the CCRB with final disciplinary authority in the cases it investigates (†)
2. Expand the CCRB’s jurisdiction to include: (1) allegations of biased policing and racial profiling; and (2) allegations against non-uniformed NYPD employees (†)
3. Codify the CCRB Administrative Prosecution Unit (APU), which now exists only pursuant to an MOU among the CCRB, NYPD and City Hall.
4. Fully fund CCRB’s current operations, and any expanded duties granted to the CCRB
D. **Enhance Police Officer Qualifications and Training**

1. Create a statewide board with authority to certify all police officers, and to revoke an officer’s certification for misconduct, which would prevent the officer from simply being hired by another jurisdiction (†)
2. Prohibit the hiring of officers with a history of excessive force or serious substantiated misconduct complaints
3. Implement mandatory annual training for all officers in the following areas:
   a. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
   b. Community relations, including effective youth engagement strategies
   c. De-escalation and violence reduction strategies
   d. Preventing racial, ethnic, religious and discriminatory profiling
4. Prohibit deployment of officers to any precinct prior to their completion of community relations training
5. Require officers deployed to any precinct to participate in an introductory two-week period focused on engagement with the community being served, including meetings with tenant associations, community groups, nonprofits, schools, business associations, youth and others

*Note: CBOs must be involved in the design and implementation of the above trainings*

E. **Other Reforms**

1. Make footage from body-worn cameras immediately publicly available (†)
2. Require that any NYPD rules governing interactions with the public, including those impacting arrests and use of force, follow the NYC Administrative Procedures Act process of public notice and comment (†)

*Items marked with an asterisk (*) are part of the “8 Can’t Wait” agenda, which has been adopted by multiple police departments throughout the country, including those in San Francisco, Boston and Tucson. The “8 Can’t Wait” agenda also includes a ban on chokeholds, which has already been enacted into law by New York City.*

*Items marked with an obelisk (†) are part of the reform agenda recommended by New York State Attorney General Letitia James*

*Note: The above NYPD reform agenda does not purport to be a comprehensive list of all actions that are needed, and instead intentionally focuses solely on essential immediate reforms to NYPD policing structures, tactics and policies. These improvements are just one component within a broader array of systemic reforms required to eliminate racial and ethnic inequities in housing, education, health care, employment, law enforcement and other areas. Finally, these reform proposals do not take a position on what amount of funding is appropriate for the NYPD.*