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OAKLAND**

CITY OF OAKLAND



2015 MAR 19 PM 4:22

ONE FRANK OGAWA PLAZA • 2ND FLOOR • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

**Noel Gallo
City Council Member, District 5**

(510) 238-7005
FAX:(510) 238-6129
TTY/TDD:(510) 839-6451

March 19, 2015

To: Chairperson Brooks & Members of the Public Safety Committee

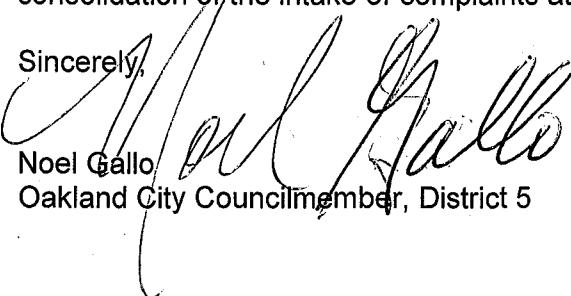
From: Councilmember Gallo

Date: March 19, 2014

Subject: 3/24/15 Public Safety Committee meeting (Item # 5) - Reaffirm Consolidation Of All Complaints Against Police At CPRB

Attached are copies of letters that were generated in 2011 by various community members and organizations in support of the \$1.4 million, in the 2011-2013 budget, to allow for the consolidation of the intake of complaints at the CPRB.

Sincerely,


Noel Gallo
Oakland City Councilmember, District 5

Attachment A: Oakland Police Accountability Coalition -Support letters (2011)

Oakland Police Accountability Coalition

Oakland Community Organizations (OCO)

Ella Baker Center

Lakeshore Baptist Church

Allen Temple Baptist Church

West Oakland Church In Christ

National Lawyers' Guild

Paul Robeson Chapter ACLU

American Friends Service Committee

Wellstone Democratic Club

John George Democratic Club

Black Women Organized for Political Power (BWOPA)

PUEBLO (People United for a Better Life in Oakland)

Community Policing Advisory Board

Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association

Make Oakland Better Now (MOBN)

ACLU Northern California

Leadership Excellence

Nation of Islam

Oscar Grant Foundation

Oakland Community Action Network (OCAN)

Oakland Green Party

Oakland Black Caucus

Center for Progressive Action

Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Jr.
Senior Pastor

Rev. Jacqueline A. Thompson
Assistant Pastor

Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Sr.
Pastor Emeritus

Pastoral Leadership Team

Rev. Reuben Hurtado
Pastor, Iglesia Bautista
De Allen Temple

Dr. Malyina Stephens
Congregational Care

Dr. Eunice Shaw
Community Care

Rev. Daniel Buford
Prophetic Justice

Rev. Pamela Wilson
Evangelism

Rev. Olu Bereola
Visitation

Rev. Theophous Reagans
Global Missions

Dr. Alvin McLean
Worship, Arts & Media

Brother Michael Grant
Director of Operations

Chairpersons

Deacon Charles Peterson
Deacons Ministry

Deacon Joseph Mondy
(Honorary Deacons Chair)

Deaconess Verta L Colton
Deaconess Ministry

Sister Verdell Brooks
Trustee Ministry

Honorable Jean Quan, Mayor

City of Oakland

Oakland City Hall 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

Oakland, California 94612

March 30, 2011

Re: Police Department Civilianization

Dear Mayor Quan,

We are writing this letter to inform you of our support for your plan to civilianize some of the positions within the Oakland Police Department and we also support the proposal to close Internal Affairs to the intaking of complaints against police officers, transferring that function to the Citizens' Police Review Board.

We agree with the sentiments expressed by the Oakland Black Caucus and Make Oakland Better Now in our desire to see an accountable complaint process that is trusted by Oakland's citizens. The budget measures that you have proposed in the 2011-2013 budget for the allocation of funds to hire eight civilians placed in the CPRB will enable eight more uniformed officers to be on the streets to protect and serve our city.

The Allen Temple Baptist Church supports your efforts that will have economic benefits, aid in crime reduction, and produce greater confidence in the accountability measures that relate to accusations of police misconduct.

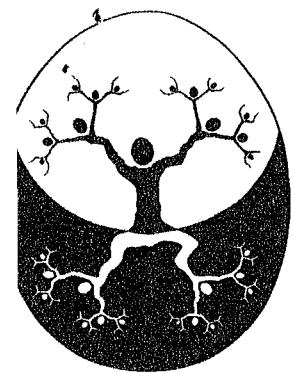
Sincerely,

Dr. J. Alfred Smith Jr., Senior Pastor

Allen Temple Baptist Church

Rev. Daniel A. Buford, Prophetic Justice Ministry

Allen Temple Baptist Church



Oakland C.A.N. dba Seven Generations Consulting

3746 39th Avenue Oakland, CA 94619

www.seven-generations.org

510.530.2448

February 21, 2011

Mayor Jean Quan
City Hall
Oakland, CA 94614

Dear Mayor Quan:

The number of available police officers for actual patrol and the number of police officers working for OPD is two different numbers. The difference is largely the number of officers permanently working inside offices in the building. The community falsely thinks that budget discussion is mainly about the officers available to work the street. Mayors and Councils since before I got on the Council in 1979 and afterward have called for 'civilianization' of the Department to bring the numbers more in line. Almost all of the jobs that officers do inside the building can be done more efficiently and effectively by civilians. In terms of the City Budget we are referring to spending public money better.

I understand that you are taking wise action by shifting \$1.2 million per year away from Internal Affairs to the Citizens Police Review Board (CPRB). This is the correct action for many reasons: (1) it releases officers for patrol duty, (2) it is a positive response to the Riders Injunction Negotiated Settlement ruling because it will improve the Department's serious consideration of police complaints, (3) it will give residents who have given up on complaining to police officers for police officer conduct (knowing about the reluctance of police to hold their own accountable) a reasonable place to exercise their right, (4) it will result in fewer million dollar pay outs for police misconduct.

Your action is a necessary first step. The Council will be pressured by advocates who have little knowledge about the wisdom of your actions. I include myself among those who will testify to members of the Council and advocate for the budget proposal in this regard that you will be presenting. I hope that you are also preparing to take the additional needed steps necessary to fully hold these heavy impact City employees accountable. That would include giving the CPRB similar powers to the Personnel Commission to directly discipline. Power to review and make

recommendations on Police Department policy - such as shooting at fleeing suspects, crowd control, audio and visual recording of interrogations, taser use, etc. - should also be given to the CPRB. In put into the hiring policy and screening policy of OPD would also be wisely given to this civilian agency. Similar to San Francisco's Police Commission, having the power to hire or at least give input into the hiring of Chiefs and Commanders is also warranted.

Mayor Quan, I want you to know that there are many knowledgeable residents of Oakland who will stand behind such smart actions on your part. You are not alone. Please call on me and my organization at any time.

Wilson Riles



94 Homestead Ave.
Oakland, CA 94615
Email: Civilardocs@makeoaklandbetternow.org

February 13, 2011

Honorable Jean Quan, Mayor
City of Oakland
Oakland City Hall
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Police Department Civilianization

Dear Mayor Quan:

Make Oakland Better Now! is a citizen advocacy group dedicated to improving public safety, public works and accountability.

We understand that the Mayor's 2011-2013 budget will propose allocating funds to hire eight civilian Citizens Police Review Board (CPRB) intake staff, allowing eight Internal Affairs sworn officers to be reassigned to patrol or crime investigation positions within the Oakland Police Department (OPD). Make Oakland Better Now! supports civilianization of OPD functions wherever possible, and therefore supports this proposal.

The many benefits to such reorganization include:

- **Economic:** It's more cost-effective to have civilians doing this job than sworn officers. The current system wastes resources with two different agencies doing the same job.
- **Crime reduction:** Civilianization matches OPD training, skills, experience and salaries to crime prevention and suppression activities; it fills eight vacant OPD positions without additional recruiting, training and hiring.
- **Community-policing and accountability:** Civilianization will make the complaint process customer-friendly and simplify it; increase public focus on civilian oversight of OPD; bring more transparency with higher reporting requirements; and increase the likelihood of bringing complaints to the CPRB in time for proper response.

The proposed addition of these civilian employees increases the use of sworn officers for true police work, and is a readily achievable, cost-effective step that furthers the City's interests in addressing both public safety and budget challenges.

Sincerely,



WELLSTONE DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL CLUB



Mayor Jean Quan
City Hall
Oakland, California 94612

February 22, 2011

Dear Mayor Quan:

I am writing on behalf of the Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club in support of your 2011-2013 budget allocation of \$1.2 million per year to enhance the work of the Civilian Police Review Board. We believe that viable citizen review is essential to police accountability and the public safety of communities.

As you know \$1.2 million per year will enable Oakland to hire eight civilian CPRB intake staff, and will allow eight Internal Affairs officers to be reassigned to patrol or investigative duties within the Oakland Police Department. The cost of civilian staff is far lower than the cost of sworn officers and is likely to enhance the credibility of the review process, from the community's standpoint. The current system wastes resources by having two different agencies doing the same job. It also establishes greater independence for the review process which will help restore public confidence and ultimately restore credibility to police operations.

A customer friendly complaint system, accompanied by good citizen outreach so that people know where to file grievances will go a long way to make Oakland safer and more "user friendly." There have been serious concerns raised in recent years about some police practices and shootings which undermine the vast majority of law abiding enforcement officers. A fully funded, transparent review system that is not internal can turn this around, while saving taxpayers' money.

It is my understanding that the Negotiated Settlement Agreement is due to expire soon, which could jeopardize the external oversight and monitoring of the OPD. This budget proposal will enable it to continue and to be more effective and less duplicative. If there are ways our organization can help spread the word about this important issue, please let me know. We look forward to continued improvements in the complaint process, and greater transparency, for both the Oakland police and the Oakland community.

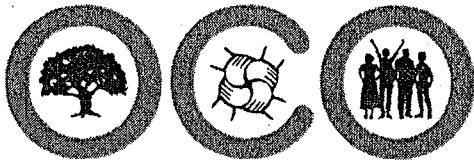
Yours sincerely,

Pamela A Drake
Local Politics Chair,
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club

www.WellstoneClub.org

P.O Box 65, Berkeley, CA 94701-0065
510.262-1001

Tel:



OAKLAND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
Unlocking the Power of Oakland

April 19, 2011

Mayor Jean Quan
City Hall
1 Frank Ogawa Plaza
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mayor Quan,

As co-chair of Oakland Community Organizations, I'd like to express my support for your leadership in the effort to civilianize the intake of citizen complaints against Oakland police officers. Increasing the staff of the Citizens' Police Review Board in order to process the intake of all complaints, rather than a small percentage, would build community confidence and transparency in the complaint process. In addition, sworn officers currently tasked with intake would be freed up to undertake necessary public safety duties unique to their training. The financial cost incurred for this transition is a necessary and long-term investment in improved community-police relations. Thank you for taking this important step. You can count on my support and the support of OCO in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Pastor Lucy Kolin
Co-chair, Oakland Community Organizations



VIA ELECTRONIC AND U.S. MAIL

February 22, 2011

Mayor Jean Quan
One Frank Ogawa Plaza
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Civilianizing police misconduct complaint intake

Dear Mayor Quan:

The Board of Directors of the Paul Robeson Chapter of the ACLU endorses the Mayor's 2011-2013 budget allocation to hire at least 8 civilian Citizens' Police Review Board intake staff, so that the intake of citizen complaints can be shifted completely to the CPRB, without any involvement by the OPD Internal Affairs Division in the intake process.

We believe that citizens are more likely to have confidence in the process when their complaints are made to civilians rather than to police officers. The effect of this increased confidence will be to improve police-community relations in Oakland.

The disappointing history of compliance by the OPD with the Negotiated Settlement Agreement raises very serious concerns about the sustainability of reforms in the OPD after the NSA expires. Expanding the scope of the CPRB by completely civilianizing the complaint intake process will help to ensure that some form of effective civilian external oversight happens in Oakland into the future.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

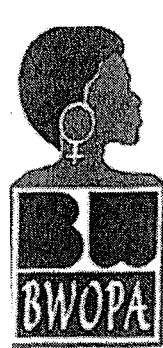
Sincerely,

Mike Chase

cc:

Jane Brunner, City Council Member
Ignacio de la fuente, City Council Member
Rebecca Kaplan, City Council Member
Desley Brooks, City Council Member
Larry Reid, City Council Member
Nancy Nadel, City Council Member
Libby Shaaf, City Council Member
Pat Kernighan, City Council Member
William McGee

Derrick Wortes
Michell Nunez
Tom Ford
Jeffrey Landau
Louise Rothman-Reimer
Grover Dye
Mary Jo Foote
Anne Gordon
Hamid Grinage
Leland Traiman



April 11, 2011

Dear Honorable Mayor Jean Quan:

Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA) Oakland/Berkeley Chapter is proud to support your 2011-13 budget allocation of \$1.2 million per year to expand the prevue of Police Citizen Review Board to include eight administrative intake positions.

As you know, BWOPA's purpose is to activate, motivate, promote, support, and educate African-American women about the political process, encourage involvement, and to affirm our commitment to, and solving of, those problems affecting the African-American community. Specifically we are committed to preserving and chronicling the political experience of African American women in California; developing collaborative linkages with other political organizations; providing leadership, training and mentoring to insure participation in the political process; articulating our collective positions on issues affecting African Americans; and developing long-range strategies to insure representation of African Americans within the political spectrum.

In this time of Oakland's fiscal crisis, we need to advance cost saving measures that prioritize the needs of our communities while having a fair and balanced budget. We believe that the \$1.2 million dollars allocated in the budget would enable the hiring of eight (8) civilian CPRB intake staff which makes smart fiscal and public safety sense because this allows the Internal Affairs police officers to be freed up to help fill on-the-ground service cut gaps. We know that civilian staff will be save the city money, provide jobs to community members and provide greater integrity to the Internal Affairs process.

We want to ensure that Oakland's fiscal health and public safety needs are being addressed in an efficient and effective manor. Thank you in advance for all of the work you are doing to lead our city forward.

Sincerely,

Aisha Brown
Chapter President
Oakland/ Berkeley



OSCAR GRANT
FOUNDA TION

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510-599-6357

Tax ID: 27-3210344

Email: oscargrantfoundation@gmail.com

www.oscargrantfoundation.com

Mayor Jean Quan
City Hall
Oakland, California 94612
February 15, 2011

Dear Mayor Jean Quan:

I am writing on behalf of the Oscar Grant Foundation to express support for your intention to include in your budget a provision that would direct all citizen complaints against Oakland police officers to the CPRB. The \$1.2 million per year will enable Oakland to hire eight civilian CPRB intake staff, and will allow eight Internal Affairs officers to be reassigned to patrol or investigative duties within the Oakland Police Department. The cost of civilian staff is far lower than the cost of sworn officers and will enhance the credibility of the review process, from the community's standpoint. I have worked with the Bart Board members on police accountability issues and believe that a citizen review committee is important to the safety of the communities. As a result, of this work, with the Bart Board members, AB1586 passed the legislative process and have become effective as of January 1, 2011, however, AB1586, in its current state, is not as effective as it should and could be.

The main issue address was the inability of internal Affairs to address these complaints in a timely manner. Another concerns was where and who to file the complaint with. We believe that by directing all complaints to the CPRB, who are not connected to the Oakland Police Department, will result in a reliable complaint process the complaint will be addressed in a timely manner. Knowing where to file a complaint and knowing that the complaint will be address by your peers will result in more people having confidence that their complaints will be taken seriously, investigated fairly, and result in greater transparency about police behaviors that lead to deceptive and costly behavior, as well as, law suits that can cost the city millions of dollars. The Oscar Grant Foundation thank you for taking this step that will lead to greater police accountability, community and police harmony, and add to the true beauty of our city, Oakland California.

Sincerely,

Cephus "Uncle Bobby" Johnson, Chief Executive Director
Beatrice X, Director



AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Pacific Mountain Region

16 Ninth Street
San Francisco,
CA 94103-1901
(415) 565-0201
Fax (415) 565-0204

Mayor Jean Quan
City Hall
Oakland, California 94612

1 February 2011

Dear Mayor Quan:

I am writing on behalf of the American Friends Service Committee in support of your 2011-2013 budget to allocate \$1.2 million per year to enhance the work of the Civilian Police Review Board. The AFSC has worked in Oakland and San Francisco since the mid 1990s on police accountability issues and we believe that viable citizen review is essential to the public safety of communities. We are encouraged to see that you already embrace this understanding.

As you know \$1.2 million per year will enable Oakland to hire eight civilian CPRB intake staff, and will allow eight Internal Affairs officers to be reassigned to patrol or investigative duties within the Oakland Police Department. The cost of civilian staff is far lower than the cost of sworn officers and is likely to enhance the credibility of the review process, from the community's standpoint. The current system wastes resources by having two different agencies doing the same job. It also establishes greater independence for the review process which will help restore public confidence and ultimately restore credibility to police operations.

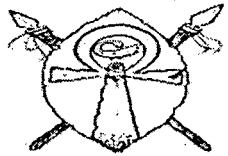
A customer friendly complaint system, accompanied by good citizen outreach so that people know where to file grievances will go a long way to make Oakland safer and more "user friendly." There have been serious concerns raised in recent years about some police practices and shootings which undermine the vast majority of law abiding enforcement officers. A fully funded, transparent review system that is not internal can turn this around, while saving taxpayers' money.

It is my understanding that the Negotiated Settlement Agreement is due to expire soon, which could jeopardize the external oversight and monitoring of the OPD. Your budget proposal will enable it to continue and to be more effective and less duplicative. If there are ways our organization can help spread the word about this important issue, please let me know. We look forward to continued improvements in the complaint process, and greater transparency, for both the Oakland police and the Oakland community.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Magnani

Laura Magnani, Interim Regional Director
Pacific Mountain Regional Office.



Leadership Excellence

Educating African American Youth for Social Change

March 2, 2011

Dear Mayor Quan:

I am writing to urge you to recommit to supporting an independent and robust Civilian Police Review Board by allocating \$1.2 million per year in the 2011-2013 budget to enhance the Board's work. Recent reports that you are advocating a single monitor to oversee the Internal Affairs office is concerning. We want to let you know that there is support and energy for a civilian led investigative body.

As you know \$1.2 million per year will enable Oakland to hire eight civilian CPRB intake staff, and will allow eight Internal Affairs officers to be reassigned to patrol or investigative duties within the Oakland Police Department. The cost of civilian staff is far lower than the cost of sworn officers and is likely to enhance the credibility of the review process, from the community's standpoint. The current system wastes resources by having two different agencies doing the same job. It also establishes greater independence for the review process, which will help restore public confidence, and ultimately restore credibility to police operations.

A customer friendly complaint system, accompanied by good citizen outreach so that people know where to file grievances will go a long way to make Oakland safer and more "user friendly." There have been serious concerns raised in recent years about some police practices and shootings which undermine the vast majority of law abiding enforcement officers. A fully funded, transparent review system that is not internal can turn this around, while saving taxpayers' money.

It is my understanding that the Negotiated Settlement Agreement is due to expire soon, which could jeopardize the external oversight and monitoring of the OPD. Your budget proposal will enable it to continue and to be more effective and less duplicative. If there are ways our organization can help spread the word about this important issue, please let me know. We look forward to continued improvements in the complaint process, and greater transparency, for both the Oakland police and the Oakland community.

Forward Ever,

'A. Saleem Shakir'

April 20, 2010

Via mail, email, and fax to

Mayor Jean Quan

Reygan Harmon

rharmon@oaklandnet.com

1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 3rd Floor

Oakland, CA 94612

officeofthemayor@oaklandnet.com

fax: (510) 238-4731

Re: Maintain Civilian Control of Citizens' Police Review Board

Dear Mayor Quan:

As a long term resident of Oakland, and as President of the National Lawyers Guild San Francisco Bay Area Chapter ("NLG SF Bay"), I strongly urge you to follow through with your commitment to the people of Oakland, in 2009-2010 as a city council member, while a candidate for mayor, and in your 2011 budget proposal, to maintain strong civilian monitoring and control of the Oakland Police Department ("OPD"). Now more than ever, it is important that the people in Oakland have effective control of the police who serve them.

The NLG SF Bay joins with the broad coalition of community groups and civil rights organizations to encourage you to continue to seek additional funds to follow through on the plan adopted by the city council and mayor as 2009-2010 and hire ten civilian auditors and intake personnel to work in the Citizens Police Review Board (CPRB). In order to ensure effective civilian control of the police, the auditors and intake staff cannot operate inside the OPD, the agency they are supposed to hold accountable. The CPRB must be independent and hold adequate enforcement power.

Staying true to your past commitments to the people of Oakland will help to ensure that the City and the Police Department are accountable to the people of Oakland. As you yourself have often pointed out, 85% of OPD officers are not city residents. Due to decades of police killings and police brutality, too many people in Oakland fear the police instead of trusting them. Recent police killings in Oakland include the shootings of Raheim Brown, Derrick Jones, Oscar Grant, Andrew Moppin, and Gary King. Although not all of these killings were by OPD officers (some were shot by OUSD police or BART police), people in Oakland have again and again demanded that the police from all agencies operating in the city be held accountable for their actions.

While the NLG SF Bay has long supported strong public employee unions, in this situation, there is a compelling financial benefit to ensuring civilian control of the police, because, as we understand, the civilian staff working in the CPRB will be doing more effective quality work, at a significant savings to the city when compared to the cost of dedicating full time OPD officers to monitor each other. It makes no sense to continue a duplicative and confusing system of having an Internal Affairs Department housed within OPD, and a Citizen Police Review Board.

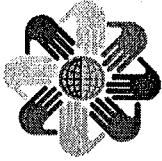
The NLGSF Bay has been monitoring and challenging OPD misconduct for decades, through its Legal Observer program and legal advocacy efforts. The NLGSF Bay was a co-sponsor of the People's Hearing On Racism and Police Violence, held February 19-20 at an Oakland middle school. Panels of jurists and hundreds of people in attendance heard testimony from witnesses who have been harmed by police racism and violence. The jurists at the People's Hearing questioned governmental compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, and the International Convention of Civil and Political Rights, human rights treaties which, having been adopted, are, according to the Constitution, "the supreme law of the land." On August 29, 2010, California adopted ACR 129, to publicize these treaties and submit reports on compliance to the U.S. Department of State and to UN Committees administering the treaties. Only a strong, independent CPRB can effectively monitor and reduce human rights violations by OPD.

We urge you to stay true to your commitments and serve the people of Oakland by ensuring civilian control of the police. Please use your power as mayor to ensure a fully staffed CPRB that is completely independent of the OPD. If you have questions and/or seek additional support in this effort, do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

R. Michael Flynn

President, National Lawyers Guild, San Francisco Bay Area



Barbara J. Attard
Accountability Associates
415-994-5944 battard@comcast.net
www.accountabilityassociates.org

March 25, 2011

Sent via U.S. Mail and Email to edillard@oakland.com

Mayor Jean Quan
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 3rd Floor
Oakland, CA 94609

Dear Mayor Quan:

I am writing in support of your proposal for a 2011-2013 budget allocation to hire civilian investigators/intake personnel for the Citizen's Police Review Board (CPRB), which would allow police officers in the Internal Affairs office to return to patrol duties. This proposal makes good fiscal sense, as well as a sound policy decision.

Increasing funding for the CPRB, and transferring the primary intake function to the agency, will strengthen the oversight authority, as well as supplement the ability of the CPRB to review complaints and ensure that all of the issues in the complaints are registered and properly documented.

Civilian personnel cost less than sworn personnel, and freeing up officers to return to patrol makes good management sense. Because complainants are often reticent to file their grievance with police officers, increasing the staffing of the CPRB and increasing its visibility will reduce costs and, at the same time, bolster the accountability of the Oakland Police Department (OPD).

I am currently a consultant in the police accountability field with over twenty-seven years of experience in oversight of law enforcement. I was employed as the San Jose Independent Police Auditor for four years, was the director of the Berkeley Police Review Commission for seven years, and began my career working in San Francisco's Office of Citizen Complaints for fifteen years as an investigator and policy specialist. I also served on the board of the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) for ten years and am a past president of the organization.

My experience has taught me the importance of community support of the police department, and the value that an effective oversight mechanism can have in engendering confidence in the police department.

During the years I worked in Berkeley and San Francisco, oversight agencies in the Bay Area met on a periodic basis to talk about issues, networking and policy. The Oakland CPRB was active in this networking group, I know the organization and the important

work that it performs in taking and investigating complaints and providing the community information about complaints and issues through public reports.

I understand that the Negotiated Settlement Agreement resulting from the litigation of the "Riders" case is being evaluated to be continued. With the possibility of this oversight winding down it is of paramount importance that the City of Oakland ensure that there is effective, adequate and robust independent review of the complaint process. Oakland has the opportunity to embrace the reforms that have been put in place and establish ongoing careful scrutiny of the OPD: complaints, supervision, use of force, policies and procedures.

Increasing the authority and staffing of the CPRB is an important next step in this process.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like to further discuss these pressing issues.

Sincerely,



Barbara Attard

cc: Oakland City Council Members

Honorable Mayor Jean Quan

Dear Mayor Quan,

I am honored to write to you on behalf of the many victims of unjust policing in the city of Oakland and beyond. You may know me by our work to bring justice in the murder of Oscar Grant, however, our work did not begin, nor did it end with the involuntary manslaughter conviction of Johannes Mehserle. However, the murder of Oscar Grant provides us with clear evidence of the failure of relying on police to police themselves in so-called internal affairs.

Internal affairs are not responsive to the needs of complainants who suffer at the hands of law enforcement. The massive failure of police departments to adequately answer the cry of victims of police brutality is profound. To be clear, Johannes Mehserle was the first officer tried and convicted for an on duty fatality; yet even a jury conceded that he committed a crime; his department backed him until the moment he was arrested and tried. In fact, former BART police Chief Gee enlisted the support of the officers in its union to send Mehserle letters of support, books to read, and money to support Mehserle's defense. Mehserle's offense and murder of Oscar Grant was never an internal affair any more than other crime. His crime was an offense against the person of Oscar Grant and the law of the people of the state of California.

Like other cities, Oakland is spending millions of dollars responding to civil lawsuits as a result of the on duty abuses of its police officers. The most famous offenses were committed by a group of officers nick-named, "The Riders". How long did the "Riders" ride through Oakland abusing people? What became of the complaints of those who suffered from their crimes? How many officers were really involved? How many internal investigations revealed crimes committed by fellow officers? How does an internal affairs officer differ from any other officer on the force? What separates an internal affairs officer from any other officers? Are the internal affairs officer's records any better than those they are charged to investigate?

The Oakland police department has failed to adequately protect its citizens from the misdeeds of its officers over the years. This is why it took a rookie officer, unwilling to stomach the abuses of his own department, to reveal the deeds of the "Riders."

Police have not proven able or willing to police themselves affectively. Oakland is not alone in this matter, but cities across the country are made to respond financially and morally to victims of police abuses. Sadly, the abusive do not pay for these abuses; but, the poor tax payers, who are regularly asked to pay more to keep the police department adequately staffed, are made to carry the burden of officers who violate the trust of the public.

This has to stop. There has to be a better way. I join my name among the list of others who believe that internal affairs should not be left in the hands of police departments. Police do not police well. We need a review process that protects the people from having their complaints screened and hidden from justice. We need a complaint system that does not rely on police to investigate police. We need a system that bring complaints into the hands of civilians who are not employees of the department; therefore, beholden to the bosses.

The Bible teaches that, "Justice stands afar off and truth cannot enter, because truth has fallen in the street." I am appealing to you, as our new Mayor, to help save the city of Oakland millions of dollars, lives and trust of citizens, by being bold enough to stand up and support a system of oversight that secures the public trust that honestly and openly reviews all matters of complaints made by the public against law enforcement officers. Abusing the public is not an internal affair.

Sincerely,

Keith Muhammad