

Portland Police Association



Officer Daryl Turner, PRESIDENT
Sergeant Tom Perkins, SECRETARY TREASURER

October 26, 2020

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Commissioner Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty
Commissioner Dan Ryan

Portland City Hall
1221 SW 4th Ave.
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Do Not Further Defund PPB In the Fall BMP

Council Members:

We find ourselves at a crossroads where the public demands thoughtful public policy that will improve policing practices, accountability, and public safety. Further defunding of the Portland Police Bureau during the Fall BMP will not meet those community demands.

As you are well aware, City Council defunded PPB by approximately \$15 million earlier this year, resulting in the elimination of 84 police positions and vital community safety policing teams. The city's population has grown by 150,000 since 1995, yet we have fewer police officers now than we did in 1995. Defunding PPB and reducing staffing levels have had very real and detrimental impacts on our community.

Defunding PPB has resulted in increased crime and gun violence on our streets. In July 2020, we saw 15 homicides and 99 shootings in the City of Portland, up nearly 500% and 300% respectively compared to July 2019. This deadly trend continued into August 2020, with 116 shootings in the City, up 280% compared to August 2019. Six of the seven homicides in August were the result of gun violence. Through August 2020, we have seen a 180% increase in shootings from 2019, with 483 shootings so far this year.

This spike in gun violence occurred right after City Council defunded PPB's Gun Violence Reduction Team. Gun violence has disproportionately impacted communities of color, with nearly 66% of the July 2020 shooting victims from the Black community.

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On the web at www.ppavigil.org

Defunding PPB has hurt our communities. We support peaceful protests and the right to speak freely. We denounce the killing of George Floyd. We also denounce violence during free speech events that has resulted in physical assaults and even murder. We denounce looting, burning, and destroying local businesses, neighborhoods, and public safety facilities. Crime has cost our City millions and has hurt livability.

Defunding PPB will not advance the police profession. Advancing law enforcement requires investment. Improved equity, de-escalation, and alternative force training; recruiting and retaining diverse officers; a fair and equitable accountability system for police discipline; and a return to neighborhood community policing — all take money. We need to fund the critical goals of reasonable and constructive police reform.

Defunding the police is unpopular. Recent Gallup polling shows that the public does NOT support abolishing police (only 15% of Americans support abolishing police). The majority of the public does NOT support defunding police (only 28% of Americans strongly support reducing police department budgets). Locally, thousands of our community members have voiced their disagreement with defunding PPB.

Defunding PPB isn't the answer. We need to invest in PPB. We need to invest in keeping our City safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daryl Turner", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the left.

Daryl Turner
President

Copy: Chief Chuck Lovell