

An Invitation to Justice: Fight for Floyd & Beyond Policy Committee's Draft Advocacy Letter

Concerned Citizen,

Would you, your church, family, or community group like to put feet to your concerns and make a statement for justice? The attached petition, destined for the legislator or policy maker of your choice can serve your determined advocacy for justice. It was crafted by the Fight for Floyd and Beyond Policy Committee with the intention of encouraging individuals, congregations, and community groups to discuss the issue and then prod politicians to actively engage in police reform. Our concerns, suggestions, and alternative solutions noted in this one-page document are meant to broaden the positive impact of policing in any community. You will find a virtual copy of this petition attached below. The waters have been stirred. Sometimes the cost of the calm to come rests upon the work yet to be done.

Potential policy makers would include:

- State representatives
- State senators
- Borough, township and city mayors and council members
- Township supervisors
- County commissioners

By distributing, discussing, and signing this petition we can advocate for policy changes in regard to police reform strengthening relationships between and safety for both law enforcement and community members.

----- [Date]

Dear ----- [Legislative Policy Maker],

We, the undersigned, write to express our grief over the health and wellness of our nation's police officers and citizens, and the racial disparities evident in community policing.

Racial inequity in police culture, leadership and practice is measurable, damaging, and destroying many aspects of public and private life; while the daily environment of police work leaves officers at greater risk of long and short term adverse health risks.¹

We write today to ask that you actively engage police reform efforts, and give due consideration to the various reform campaigns that come across your desk. We ask that you dedicate resources and attention to support police culture and practices that you can be proud of, that can be enacted in your lifetime. Our hope is that with the commitment and hard work of people in your position, all officers and communities can thrive.

We ask that you engage innovation, seek evidence based solutions that prioritize alternatives to policing, bolster community resources and mental health services, and support healthy dialogue between police departments and the communities they serve.² Being a police officer should not mean that you are the community's sole caretaker. Local communities often have the knowledge, training and workers available to assess and delegate a variety of non-violent responses for a variety of community crises.

In addition to expanding alternatives to policing, **we ask that you help create healthy policies in Pennsylvania:**

- Halt no-knock warrants like Louisville
- Ban chokeholds like Iowa
- Require independent investigations of officer-involved shootings like Utah
- Demilitarize the police like Montana
- Establish a duty to intervene when one officer sees another go too far as recommended by the U.S. Department of Justice (see <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-54339252>)
- Make it impossible for any police officer who was fired for misconduct in another state to become a police officer anywhere in Pennsylvania
- Spend our money in line with the outcomes communities seek
- Engage mental health services with police response team

Now is the time to create a Pennsylvania that holds the health and wellness of the people and those who serve as its supreme law.

Sincerely,

¹ "One the Job Stress Negatively Impacts Police Officer Health," EHS Today, <https://www.ehstoday.com/health/article/21915261/onthejob-stress-negatively-impacts-police-officer-health-study-suggests#:~:text=Officers%20were%20at%20increased%20risk,or%20left%20the%20police%20force>

² The Final Report on The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf