



June 14, 2020

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

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

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson,

Enclosed please find a Statement and Resolution approved by Downtown Independent Democrats Executive Committee on June 14, 2020 *Against Police Brutality and in Support of Anti-Racist Protests*.

We ask the Mayor and Council to reduce the NYPD budget by **at least \$1 billion this year**; reallocate to social services like the Departments of Education, Homeless Services, Health, and others; and fund programs like social workers in every school and Summer Youth Employment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Corman', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Richard Corman
President, Downtown Independent Democrats

Enclosure

cc: Melanie Hartzog, Director of Office of Management and Budget, New York City
Dermot F. Shea, NYC Police Commissioner
Hon. Margaret Chin, NYC Council Member
Hon. Carlina Rivera, NYC Council Member
Hon. Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senator
Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Representative
Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, U.S. Representative
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, U.S. Representative
Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo, NY State Governor
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NY State Senate Temporary President and Majority Leader
Hon. Carl E. Heastie, Speaker, NY State Assembly
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator
Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY State Assembly Member
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY State Assembly Member
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, NYC Comptroller
Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President



Statement and Resolution by Downtown Independent Democrats Against Police Brutality and in Support of Anti-Racist Protests

June 14, 2020

The massive, unrelenting protests against racial injustice that we are witnessing, unseen since the Civil Rights Era of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., have brought forth a moment when we must act to end systemic racism and fulfill America's founding effort to become a more perfect union.

We applaud the New York Legislature and Governor Andrew Cuomo's repeal of New York State Civil Rights Law Section 50-a, as well as efforts to deter the use of excessive force by the police during physical confrontations in the appropriately named "Eric Garner Chokehold Ban." Much more needs to be done, not just in the realm of criminal justice, but economic justice, housing justice, and education justice, but these are important first steps down the path to building an equitable society.

The backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic has led to significant budget cuts at all levels of government, yet one area remains untouched: the police budget. In an economically treacherous moment unseen since The Great Depression, we cannot allow for the police budget to remain sacrosanct while the city's and state's finances have already demanded and produced cuts to essential services like transportation and education.

We recognize that police unions have secured well-paying jobs with a clear path to the middle class for their workers. As a Democratic political club, we expect and support city efforts to retain police with good disciplinary records, transferring them to other city jobs as budget attrition occurs. DID has honored community police officers in the past, and DID recognizes and will never forget the sacrifices made by NYPD and law enforcement on 9/11.

But as we grapple with this unique moment in American history, at the cross-current of economic upheaval and civic awakening, now is the time to not just reform the police, but to rebuild the police so that they may fulfil their mission to our city, our state, and our country. Only then will we truly be able to move towards a more perfect union.

DID resolves that the Council and Mayor reduce the NYPD budget by **at least \$1 billion this year**; reallocate to social services like the Departments of Education, Homeless Services, Health, and others; and fund programs like social workers in every school and Summer Youth Employment.

WHEREAS

1. The NYPD's mission is "to enhance the quality of life in New York City by working in partnership with the community to enforce the law, preserve peace, protect the people, reduce fear, and maintain order; and the NYPD's values are to "protect the lives and property of our fellow citizens and impartially enforce the law; fight crime, both by preventing it and aggressively pursuing violators of the law; maintain a higher standard of integrity than is generally expected of others because so much is expected of us; and value human life, respect the dignity of each individual and render our services with courtesy and civility." ¹

2. During late-May 2020 and early-June 2020, the NYPD all too frequently used excessive force against peaceful protesters and members of the media exercising their Constitutional rights;

¹ NYPD Mission, NYPD, retrieved June 12, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/about/about-nypd/mission.page>

3. There has been a history of disproportionate police brutality and violence towards Black Americans both in New York City and across the nation;
4. The brutal murder of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer must be a catalyst for dramatic change in policing in our city and nation;
5. The NYPD receives a large share of the NYC budget with cuts at disproportionately low rates:
 - a. The Mayor's estimated FY 2021 budget includes \$5.92 billion per year for NYPD, an increase of 6% over 2020, including \$730 million per year just for overtime pay.^{2 3} By comparison, the 2020 NYPD budget is a 20% increase from \$4.68 billion in 2014 under Mayor Bloomberg;^{4 5 6}
 - b. With budgetary shortfalls expected from the Coronavirus economic crisis, all departments are at risk of having their budgets severely cut. The NY Citizens Budget Commission recommends cutting 9,000 jobs, including 1,174 jobs from the NYPD for fiscal reasons alone. For example, the Department of Education is facing possible cuts up to 20%, and Housing Preservation and Development is also facing large cuts;^{7 8}
 - c. The New York City Council has put forth a plan to cut \$1 billion from NYPD budget, which according to the Daily News would achieve this by "removing functions like school safety and homeless outreach from the police; reducing the size of the force, from 36,000 to 33,000, through a hiring freeze and by not replacing officers who retire; and limiting overtime pay."⁹
 - d. New York City still plans to spend \$8.7+ billion dollars to create four new jails.¹⁰

² Exhibit 2, page 86, The City of New York Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2021, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, April 16, 2020, <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/omb/downloads/pdf/mm4-20.pdf>

³ 'Defund the NYPD'? What's Really in the New York City Police Department Budget, Gotham Gazette, June 9, 2020, <https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/9475-defund-the-nypd-whats-in-new-york-city-police-department-budget-de-blasio>

⁴ Re: Reducing and Redirecting the NYPD Budget, Letter to the Mayor, Scott Stringer, June 4, 2020, <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/6.4.20-Letter-to-Mayor-de-Blasio.pdf>

⁵ What NYC could do with its \$6 billion police budget, Curbed New York, June 5, 2020, <https://ny.curbed.com/2020/6/5/21279214/nyc-defund-nypd-police-budget-affordable-housing-homelessness>

⁶ Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2014 Executive Budget for the Police Department, The Council of the City of New York, May 23, 2013, <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2013/06/fy2014-2police.pdf>

⁷ Fiscal watchdog recommends cutting 9,000 city jobs and hiking property taxes to ensure NY's long-term financial health due to coronavirus, NY Daily News, June 10, 2020 <https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/ny-citizens-budget-commission-new-york-city-budget-de-blasio-rein-20200610-lmkuiv7gqvclnd3phc4ad3ihqa-story.html>

⁸ What \$1 Billion of the NYPD's Budget Could Do for Housing, Curbed New York, June 12, 2020, <https://ny.curbed.com/2020/6/12/21287068/nyc-housing-nypd-budget-homelessness-coronavirus>

⁹ NYC Council proposed plan would cut \$1 billion from NYPD budget, NY Daily News June 12, 2020, <https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/ny-nypd-billion-dollar-budget-cut-city-council-20200612-wtcuyj7q7fe2lnvvv4htltnju-story.html>

¹⁰ Opinion: NYC Should Learn from LA Before Building New Jails, Coss Marte and Christopher Marte, September 27, 2019, <https://citylimits.org/2019/09/27/opinion-nyc-should-learn-from-la-before-building-new-jails/>



Therefore be it resolved that Downtown Independent Democrats supports:

1. Black Lives Matter;
2. Condemning the brutal murder of **George Floyd**, as well as that of **Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks, Ahmaud Aubery, Eric Garner, Akai Gurley, Delrawn Small, Mohamed Bah, James Powell, Nicholas Heyward Jr., Amadou Diallo, Malcolm Ferguson, Patrick Moses Dorismond, Ousmane Zongo, Tim Stansbury, Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Tamon Robinson, Kimani Gray, and countless other Black people killed by the police**. These are not just crimes of individuals, but is a systemic failure of a system that devalues and discriminates against Black Americans.^{11 12}
3. Rapid enactment of the police reforms of June 12, 2020, and quickly disclosing police disciplinary records with the repeal of New York State Civil Rights Law Section 50-a;¹³
4. The creation of an Office of Special Investigation in the Attorney General's office and a state Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigative Office, to act as independent watchdogs for police abuse;
5. That the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) launch immediate investigations into any and all instances of police brutality or excessive force used against peaceful protestors and members of the media during late-May 2020 and early-June 2020;
6. That Mayor Bill de Blasio direct the NYPD to immediately cease any and all police-instigated violence toward the public and the peaceful protests, such as “kettling,” and instead employ de-escalation techniques in all instances of peaceful protest;
7. That, in light of the coronavirus pandemic, the Mayor’s office and New York City Council outline a path towards budget justice that does not leave the police budget untouched at a time when all other essential services to our society may be cut:
 - a. Reduce the NYPD budget by **at least \$1 billion this year**; reallocate to necessary social services like Department of Education, Department of Homeless Services, Department of Health, and other departments; and fund programs like social workers in every school and Summer Youth Employment Program.
 - b. Ensure an independent oversight board to review police officers' disciplinary records and ensure that officers with negative disciplinary histories face consequences that equal justice demands.
 - c. Enable officers with good disciplinary histories to transfer to roles in other departments, where possible with equivalent pay, pension and benefits, at the discretion of receiving departments.
 - d. Stop the development of new jails, and reallocate the **\$8.7+ billion** in funds earmarked for new jails to community and social services.

¹¹ The NYPD Has A Long History Of Killing Unarmed Black Men, Huffington Post, July 18, 2014,

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/killed-by-the-nypd-black-men_n_5600045

¹² At City Hall Rally, Families Recount Stories of Black Relatives Killed by Police, Brooklyn Paper, June 10, 2020,

<https://www.brooklynpaper.com/at-city-hall-rally-families-recount-stories-of-black-relatives-killed-by-police/>

¹³ N.Y. Bans Chokeholds and Approves Other Measures to Rein In Police, New York Times, June 12, 2020,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/nyregion/50a-repeal-police-floyd.html>