



hogan's alley society



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Over Seventy Organizations Call on Vancouver Police Board and Province of BC to Ban Police Street Checks

July 6, 2020, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh/Vancouver, BC – Seventy-three local and provincial organizations are calling on the Vancouver Police Board and Province of BC to immediately ban police street checks.

With Motion B2 “Ending Street Checks in Vancouver” going forward to Vancouver City Council on July 7, the BC Civil Liberties Association, Black Lives Matter-Vancouver, Hogan’s Alley Society, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and WISH Drop-In Centre Society are renewing an urgent call to implement an immediate ban on the racist and illegal practice of street checks.

In an [open letter](#) addressed to the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Police Board, Government of BC, and the Director of Police Services, the organizations write, “We are writing you to put actions to your words and take immediate action to address systemic discrimination in policing by ending all street checks in Vancouver and BC. Street checks are harmful and discriminatory for Indigenous, Black, and low-income communities. Street checks also have no basis in law, and you have the powers to ban them.”

There is rising public momentum calling for immediate action to address anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, and racialized policing practices across Canada. The five organizations are also launching an online [petition](#), encouraging individuals to join the call for an immediate ban on police street checks in Vancouver and across BC.

While there has been much emphasis on street checks in Vancouver, the same pattern emerges in municipal police departments across the province. [Data](#) from Abbotsford, Central Saanich, Nelson, New Westminster, Oak Bay, Port Moody, Saanich, and West Vancouver police departments reveal a decade of racial targeting of Indigenous, Black and racialized communities, with Indigenous women particularly over-represented in all departments’ street check data. In West Vancouver in 2018, for example, Indigenous women represented 17.6% of street checked women, despite making up 0.6% of the population there.

Along with the five organizations, an array of sixty-eight community, environmental, faith, health, labour, legal, LGBTQ, student, and women’s groups have co-signed the letter for a municipal and provincial ban on street checks. The co-signatories include: Amnesty International Canada, Atira Women’s Resource Society, Battered Women’s Support Services, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, BC Community Alliance, BC First Nations Justice Council,

BC Government and Service Employees' Union, BC Health Coalition, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, Carnegie Community Action Project, Disability Alliance BC, Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, First United Church Community Ministry Society, Graduate Student Society at SFU, Our Homes Can't Wait Coalition, Pacific Association of First Nations Women, Pivot Legal Society, QMUNITY: BC's Queer Resource Centre, RainCity Housing, Rise Women's Legal Centre, Sex Workers United Against Violence Society, Sierra Club BC, South Asian Mental Health Alliance, WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre, West Coast Environmental Law Association, and YWCA Metro Vancouver.

Open letter with 73 co-signatories is available [here](#).

Petition is available [here](#).

MEDIA CONTACTS

Lama Mugabo, Director, Hogan's Alley Society: 604-715-9565

Harsha Walia, Executive Director, BC Civil Liberties Association: 778-885-0040

Latoya Farrell, Policy Lawyer, BC Civil Liberties Association: 780-716-4408; latoya@bccla.org

Mebrat Beyene, Executive Director, WISH Drop-In Centre Society: 604-836-6464

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of Union of BC Indian Chiefs: 250-490-5314

Chief Don Tom, Vice President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs: 604-290-6083

Udokam Iroegbu: blacklivesmattervan@gmail.com