Communication from Public

Name: Nathaniel Goodman
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Comments for Public Posting: #BlackLivesMatter #DefundThePolice We need to reevaluate how law enforcement is organized in this city. Please look to efforts like that of Camden, NJ to reform and reconstruct public safety. Many are pushing back on the idea of systemic racism by trying to keep the discussion to personal actions. The issue is not whether there are bad apples, nor good apples. The issue is whether there is a quasi-experiential expansion of suspicion that is driving law enforcement rather than the concept of public safety for which police forces were originally created. This has led to the systemic targeting of attention and resources on the communities least able to counteract. That is the racism of the system. It has nothing to do with the individuals, but it does direct the individuals to believe they are contributing to public safety when in fact they are contributing to public anxiety that ultimately leads to "law breaking." The system and aims of the system need to be reformed to return the aim to public safety and keeping peace. Both are goals very different from the goal of punishment, which is measured in metrics like arrests and convictions, goosed by those that are non-violent "offenses." The supposed success of metrics should not be the guiding force of our public safety. The goals and outcomes should be instead the reduction of tension and the possibility of aid and rehabilitation, both of which are outside the bounds of the police, and as currently organized, the prison system. Resources need to be put instead into community, and community responsibility for aiding its own local residents and for policing, such as it will be, to be fully engaged with the communities in which it assigned. We all know that the system as it exists is not working and does not represent the population of this diverse city. This is the moment where the public will exists for top down intelligent reform. Please take advantage of this moment.