

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF DEFUNDING THE POLICE AND INVESTING IN COMMUNITY

Drafted based on the statements by Black Lives Matter Seattle King County¹, Equity Now King County², Nikkita Oliver,³ Shaun Scott⁴ and demands from the organizers of the Defund Seattle Police rally and march

WHEREAS too many friends and family members in our community have been killed by taxpayer-funded law enforcement officers; and even more have been harmed physically and psychologically by over-militarized, over-funded police and sheriffs departments; and

WHEREAS Charleena Lyles, Renee Davis, Tommy Le, Che Taylor, Shaun Fuhr, Isaiah Obet and Jesse Sarey (both killed by officer Jeff Nelson), Giovonn Joseph McDade, Jack Sun Keewatinawin, Alonzo Price-Holt (who survived to tell his story but has suffered immensely), John T. Williams, Mi'Chance Dunlap-Gittens, and their families have not received justice for the lives cut short by state-sanctioned violence;³ and

WHEREAS Following a nine-month investigation of the Seattle Police Department (SPD), in December 2011, the U.S. DoJ Civil Rights Division and the US Attorney's Office, Western District of WA found a pattern or practice of excessive force that violates the U.S. Constitution and federal law.⁵ A federal judge has said that the police force has not made enough progress to have the consent decree lifted. Under the political cover of a complicit Mayor Durkan, SPD was attempting to have the federally-mandated consent decree process abrogated, citing COVID-19 as an excuse;⁴ and

WHEREAS in other jurisdictions, such as Camden, New Jersey, the police departments have been disbanded, reimaged, and born again, with fewer officers and a strategic shift toward "community policing" -- resulting in lower crime and lower taxpayer funding requirements;⁶ and

WHEREAS the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) failed to enact reforms about the way they investigate shootings by deputies that were recommended by Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO) almost three years ago;⁷ and

WHEREAS powerful police unions like the Seattle and King County Police Officer's Guilds abuse the political cover of organized labor and progressive Democrats to continue resisting even moderate police accountability reforms; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the King County Democrats call on the Seattle Mayor and City Council and the King County Council to immediately shift half of our public safety investment in SPD and KCSO into community-led health and safety strategies and away from over-militarized, aggressive policing tactics; this should include investment of \$50 million dollars of such repurposed funds into a) Black-led community-based organizations and b) property acquisition for Black-led community-based organizations²; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the Seattle Mayor, City Council, and King County Council, and the accept current proposals to maximize the following underutilized public land for community benefit: 1) Decommissioned Fire Station 6 on 23rd and Yesler to become William Grose Center for Enterprise as designated in the City of Seattle Equitable Development Plan, 2) Vacant Sound Transit lot on Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. and S. Angeline St. to become Youth Achievement Center, 3) Formally Black-owned Paramount Nursing Home recently acquired by Washington State to revert to Black-community ownership, 4) Seattle Housing Authority Operations Site (Martin Luther King Jr. Way S. & Dearborn) to become affordable housing, 5) Halt development at the King County Records Site project on 13th and Yesler to allow for equitable participation by a Black-led, community-based organization, 6) Halt the Priority Development Area proposal for the Seattle Vocational Institute ("SVI") put forward by the Washington State Department of Commerce to conduct and start a new RFP process that is truly open, transparent and accountable to the community in which SVI is located.²

¹ <http://blacklivesseattle.org/blm06032020statement/> and <https://blacklivesseattle.org/our-demands/>

² <https://www.kingcountyequitynow.com/>

³ <https://www.facebook.com/nikkitaroliver/posts/10100889122463680>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/shaunsscott1984/posts/10110494684789458>

⁵ <http://www.seattlemonitor.com/overview>

⁶ <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/01/what-happened-to-crime-in-camden/549542/>

⁷ <https://www.knxx.org/post/report-king-county-sheriffs-office-failed-enact-reforms-after-2017-shooting>

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the Seattle Mayor, SPD, County Executive and KCSO to implement a fully transparent bargaining process and to stop using collective bargaining as a barrier to police accountability and for SPOG and SPMA to accept and fully implement the City of Seattle police accountability legislation⁸ as was unanimously accepted by the Seattle City Council;³ and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the Seattle Mayor and Seattle City Council to establish a de-escalation team specializing in and dedicated solely to de-escalating tensions¹ and fully meet the demands of the Seattle Community Police Commission⁹; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the Seattle City Attorney to immediately release and decline to prosecute protesters, including those arrested violating curfew, and those living in encampments;⁵ and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on all elected officials overseeing and funding law enforcement organizations (esp. SPD, KCSO, National Guard) to enact and implement the following policies: all law enforcement at demonstrations must turn on their body cams and leave them on throughout the entirety of their shift, each officer's badge number must be unhidden and on full display¹; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on all school district directors and superintendents, and the state superintendent to immediately sever all existing contracts, and all financial ties, with SPD, KCSO and other law enforcement entities² and on our State Legislators to fully fund our public schools with a capital gains tax by 2021¹; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the KCSO to cease fighting against the reformed inquest process of King County; to require officers show up to testify when summoned as a part of inquests when an officer involved killing occurs; to stop all efforts to prevent inquest juries from making a finding of criminality as a part of the inquest process;³ and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on the King County Council and KCSO, in cooperation with OLEO, to improve internal investigative and review mechanisms regarding officer-involved shootings, including responding to each of the recommendations in the February 2020 OLEO report¹⁰; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on all of our elected officials at the City, School District, County, State and Federal levels to draft, put forward and vote for efforts to redirect funding for police to increased funding for health and social services¹, such as full access to affordable housing, community-based anti-violence programs, trauma services and treatment, universal childcare, and free public transit (just a few of the non-police solutions proven to lower crime);⁵ and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the King County Democrats call on our elected officials to publicly support these efforts and devote your platform, time and resources to achieving them.

Adopted by: _____ on June __, 2020

⁸

https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/CommunityPoliceCommission/Ordinance_APPROVED_052217_ALL_STRIKEOUTS_REMOVED.pdf

⁹ <http://perspectives.seattle.gov/seattle-cpc-outlines-next-steps-the-city-must-take-to-address-police-accountability/>

¹⁰ <https://mkcclegisearch.kingcounty.gov/View.ashx?M=A&ID=791933&GUID=183A9F8C-C7B9-4B6A-BA85-B57AF6779804>