



July 14, 2025

The Honorable Zeke Cohen
Baltimore City Council President
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

The Honorable Mark Conway
Baltimore City Councilmember
Chair, Public Safety Committee
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

The Honorable Brandon Scott
Mayor of Baltimore City
100 Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: Written Testimony for the July 15 Baltimore City Council Public Safety
Committee Hearing on Police Accountability

Dear Council President Cohen, Council Chairperson Conway, and Mayor Scott:

On behalf of the Campaign for Justice Safety and Jobs, which is comprised of the undersigned non-profit organizations, we welcome the opportunity to present written testimony for the Baltimore City Council Public Safety Committee hearing on police accountability, scheduled for July 15, 2025. We write with heavy hearts about the police-involved deaths of three Baltimore residents: Bilal “B.J.” Abdullah, a Black man who was fatally shot on June 17, 2025;¹ Dontae Melton Jr., a Black man who became unresponsive after Baltimore Police Department (BPD) officers restrained him on June

¹ See Press Release, Antony G. Brown, Maryland Attorney General, Brown Statement on Independent Investigations Division Investigating Fatal Officer Involved Shooting in the City of Baltimore (Jun. 18, 2025), <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/061825c.pdf>.

24, 2025, and died hours later in the hospital;² and Pytorcarcha Brooks, a 70-year-old Black woman fatally shot by police on June 25, 2025.³ Reportedly, all were either experiencing a behavioral or mental health crisis or behaving out of character. Also, we were outraged to learn that a 34-year-old BPD officer who was known to have placed a 16-year-old girl, who he was “dating,” in a chokehold was recently charged with rape and assault.⁴

The Independent Investigations Division of the Office of the Maryland Attorney General is investigating each of these tragic police-involved deaths, and the BPD officer has been criminally charged with rape and assault, among other charges. As we await the completion of the investigations and criminal case, this testimony provides concerns, questions, and recommendations for changes in BPD and city policy, based on the most recently available information about these incidents. Specifically, we make three recommendations, as indicated below and further explained in this testimony:

1) The BPD should review and revise its use of force and de-escalation policies and trainings;

2) City officials should publicize more extensively the City’s 988 helpline for individuals experiencing mental or behavioral health crises, expand the types of calls that the 988 system can accept, expand the community-based mental and behavioral health programs and services that can act as first responders, and ensure that the BPD request behavioral health response resources when needed; and

3) City officials should, through policymaking or legislation, grant access to independent counsel and independent investigatory powers to Baltimore’s Police Accountability Board and Administrative Charging Committee, and in the long-term create an Independent Office of Police Accountability.

For over a decade, our organizations have worked to create a public safety system in Baltimore that protects and serves all its residents. For example, we supported the request for a civil rights investigation of the BPD after the 2015 police-involved death of Freddie Gray, which led to the 2017 federal, court-ordered settlement agreement (or consent decree) between the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), BPD and city officials

² See Press Release, Antony G. Brown, Maryland Attorney General, Brown Statement on Independent Investigations Division Investigating Fatal Police-Involved In Custody Deaths in the City of Baltimore, (Jun. 26, 2025), <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/062625b.pdf>.

³ See Press Release, Antony G. Brown, Maryland Attorney General, Brown Statement on Independent Investigations Division Investigating Fatal Police-Involved Shooting in the City of Baltimore, (Jun. 26, 2025), <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/062625a.pdf>; Stephon Dingle, *Family, community mourn woman killed by Baltimore Police during mental health crisis call: “She has a name”*, CBS NEWS (Jun. 27, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/maryland-police-shooting-mental-health-crisis-community-mourns/>.

⁴ Adam Thompson, Mike Hellgren, *Baltimore officer denied bail on charges of raping, assaulting 16-year-old girl*, CBS NEWS (Jul. 2, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/baltimore-police-officer-raping-16-year-old-girlfriend-charging-documents/>.

and the current, ongoing monitorship.⁵ We have closely followed the consent decree's implementation. We have also supported successful efforts to return oversight of the BPD, through local control, from the state to city officials.⁶ Distressingly, eight years after approval of the consent decree and 10 years after Freddie Gray's death, we find ourselves, once again, needing answers to questions about the BPD's use of force and its interactions with people experiencing a mental or behavioral health crises, among other concerns.

Since 2017, the federal court has terminated its jurisdiction of only two of the 17 broad reform requirements of the consent decree after the BPD demonstrated its full compliance with those two mandates.⁷ In addition, the BPD, city officials, and relevant agencies have made modest progress with consent decree requirements relating to: use of force; responses to and interactions with people with mental health disabilities or in crisis and the diversion of 911 calls to behavioral health services, where appropriate; and community policing and engagement. We respectfully urge you to redouble efforts so that BPD can reach full compliance with these reform mandates. Baltimore has the tools to ensure public safety and police accountability through the consent decree reforms and the hard-fought victory of local control of the BPD. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to create a public safety system in Baltimore that protects and respects all residents.

I. The police-involved deaths by BPD officers must prompt a review and update of BPD's use of force policies and trainings.

Over a eight-day period this past June, three Baltimore residents, who were reportedly experiencing a mental or behavioral health crises or acting uncharacteristically, lost their lives after encounter with BPD officers. BPD policies 1115 (Use of Force) and 1107 (De-escalation) list factors officers should consider prior to using force. These factors include whether the person is exhibiting signs of mental illness or a behavioral health crisis. Given the suspected mental or behavioral health crises of the individuals recently killed by BPD officers, there is a pressing need to review these policies and relevant police training to make any necessary updates so that officers adequately consider the required factors before using force.

⁵ *United States v. Police Department of Baltimore City, et al.*, No. 1:17-cv-00099-JKB, Doc. 2-2 (D. MD. Jan. 12, 2017) [hereinafter "*Consent Decree*"].

⁶ Press Release, Mayor Brandon M. Scott, Mayor Scott Statement on *Bill Enshrining Baltimore Police Department into City's Charter and Code*, (Jan. 24, 2024), <https://mayor.baltimorecity.gov/news/press-releases/2024-01-24-mayor-scott-signs-bills-enshrining-baltimore-police-department-citys>; Emily Hofstaedter, *Language prohibiting local control of Baltimore City police gone June 1*, WYPR, (May 31, 2024), <https://www.wypr.org/wypr-news/2024-05-31/general-assembly-removes-final-local-control-barriers-for-baltimore-city-police>.

⁷ Emily Hofstaedter, *Baltimore police released from two sections of the consent decree near anniversary of Freddie Gray's Death*, WYPR, (Apr. 17, 2025), <https://www.wypr.org/wypr-news/2025-04-17/baltimore-police-released-from-two-sections-of-consent-decree-near-anniversary-of-freddie-grays-death>.

A review of BPD data supports the need for a review of its use of force policies. From January to June 2024, the BPD reported 442 use of force incidents; 57 (13%) of them were associated with behavioral health-related calls for service.⁸ The latest Baltimore City Behavioral Health Collaborative Data Subcommittee Biannual report notes that, over a six-month period, six people had more than five crisis-related encounters with the BPD.⁹ Moreover, BPD officers reportedly responded to 20 behavioral health calls at Pytorcarcha Brooks' residence before she was killed by police on June 25.¹⁰ This long history of repeat encounters, as well as reported conversations on the scene with her family about her mental health issues,¹¹ raise concerns about the extent to which the BPD officers considered Ms. Brooks' apparent behavioral health crisis prior to using deadly force, as required by BPD policies. In fact, as more details about Ms. Brooks' death have been released, we recently learned that the responding officers entered her residence by kicking down the doors to enter, contradicting best de-escalation practices.¹² These disturbing facts causes us to question whether the BPD contacted mental or behavioral health crisis resources or made adequate use of them.

According to a preliminary investigation of the police-involved death of Dontae Melton Jr., BPD officers interacted with him as he was walking in an intersection in West Baltimore. Mr. Melton appeared to be experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis. The officers placed him in handcuffs and leg restraints and called emergency medical services (EMS). However, EMS did not come, reportedly because the BPD's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system failed that night.¹³ While the officers waited for EMS for almost an hour, Mr. Melton became unresponsive, leading officers to eventually transport him in a police cruiser to the hospital where he later died.¹⁴ Although we hope to learn more facts in the coming days and weeks, we are already deeply concerned about the use of restraints during an apparent mental health crisis, the absence of medical treatment at the scene, and, ultimately, the delayed medical treatment at the hospital. The circumstances of Mr. Melton's death also call for BPD to

⁸ Baltimore Police Department, Baltimore City Behavioral Health Collaborative Data Subcommittee Biannual Report Jan 1, 2024- Jun 30, 2024, at 16 (Dec. 12, 2024), <https://www.baltimorepolice.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/Q1-Q2%202024%20BH%20Data%20Report%20Final%20%28clean-corrected%29.pdf>. This report states that "BPD responded to 4,280 behavioral health calls from January to June 2024," which means that 1.3% of behavioral health calls resulted in a use of force incident.

⁹ *Id.* at 12.

¹⁰ Sanya Kamidi and Logan Hullinger, *City's crisis response system under scrutiny after three police-involved deaths in eight days*, BALTIMORE BEAT, (Jun. 27, 2025), <https://baltimorebeat.com/citys-crisis-response-system-under-scrutiny-after-three-police-involved-deaths-in-eight-days/>.

¹¹ Ben Conarck and Darreonna Davis, *'I'm going hot with a Taser': Baltimore Police broke down door before shooting 70-year-old*, BALT. BANNER, (Jul. 9, 2025), <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/criminal-justice/bpd-body-camera-police-shooting-woman-72SK7J6G2FHTJAPCVKO4JSCI7M/>.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Darreonna Davis, *A mother's emergency petition for her son was denied. He dies just over 24 hours later.*, BALT. BANNER, (Jul. 11, 2025), <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/local-news/dontae-melton-baltimore-police-custody-death-HQHHHJTUKVCCPJCNDX4TSFJCUDU/>.

¹⁴ *Supra* note 2, See also, Barry Simms, *Residents familiar with man who died in police custody while suffering apparent mental health crisis*, WBALTV11, (Jun. 28, 2025) <https://www.wbalTV.com/article/residents-familiar-man-died-police-custody-mental-health/65225938>.

establish a policy and implement training—or improve any existing policy—on how to get medical assistance for people in need when the CAD system is not working.

Beyond the recent tragic fatal encounters with BPD, another impetus to review and update Policies 1115 and 1107 is the U.S. Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in *Barnes v. Felix*,¹⁵ issued in May 2025, which has significant implications for the constitutional standard governing police use of force. In *Barnes*, the Court reiterated its previous decisions, holding that police officers’ use of deadly force violates the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution when it is not objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances. The Court unequivocally rejected the “moment-of-threat” rule, which considers only the circumstances that existed at the moment of the officer’s perceived threat that caused the officer to use deadly force.¹⁶ The Court underscored that the “totality of the circumstances’ inquiry into a use of force has no time limit[,and] earlier facts and circumstances may bear on how a reasonable officer would have understood and responded to later ones.”¹⁷ We therefore urge BPD leadership to work with the consent decree monitoring team to review and update the definition of “totality of circumstances” in the BPD’s Use of Force and De-escalation policies, as well as any relevant training materials, to make sure they align with the *Barnes* decision.

II. The fatal interactions between BPD and people experiencing mental or behavioral health crises raise concerns about officers’ use of Baltimore City’s mental or behavioral health response services.

We are deeply concerned about the BPD’s treatment of people in mental or behavioral health crisis. Ms. Brooks and Mr. Melton were each reportedly experiencing such crises when they encountered police, and it is not yet known whether the city’s mental or behavioral health crisis resources were used in these calls for service. Nationally, people with an untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed in a police encounter, when compared to those without a mental illness.¹⁸ Between July and December 2023, the BPD had 1,907 interactions with people in behavioral or mental health crisis; of those, 74% were Black, 20% were white, 1.2% were Asian, and 1.2% were Latino.¹⁹ To reduce the likelihood of these potentially deadly encounters, especially for Baltimore’s Black residents, we urge city officials to publicize much more extensively the city’s 988 emotional support helpline. City officials should also increase community-based mental or behavioral health services to address residents’ mental and

¹⁵ *Barnes v. Felix*, 605 U.S., ___, 145 S. Ct 1353 (2025).

¹⁶ *Id.* at 1357.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 1358.

¹⁸ Eric Rafla-Yuan, Divya K. Chhabra, and Michael O. Mensah, *Decoupling Crisis Response from Policing –A Step Towards Equitable Psychiatric Emergency Services*, (May 5, 2021), <https://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMms2035710>.

¹⁹ *Supra* note 8 at 10.

behavioral health needs and help prevent fatal police encounters.²⁰ Also, the BPD should better utilize city mental or behavioral health crisis response services when needed.

In 2016, the DOJ's investigative report of the BPD found that the agency's use of force against people with mental health disabilities or those experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis violated the Americans with Disabilities Act.²¹ As you know well, the BPD has increased the percentage of officers who are trained in crisis intervention. Since launching its pilot 911/988 diversion program, the city has increased the call types eligible for diversion from law enforcement to health care services, but the call centers seem inadequately staffed. According to a 2024 Baltimore City report, there appears to be only a single clinician embedded in the 911 call center to help call takers determine if calls can be diverted to 988.²²

The recent fatal encounters with people acting uncharacteristically or in mental or behavioral health crisis demonstrate that more sustained, and additional, clinical or peer presence is urgently needed at the 911 call center. Additionally, we urge you, in partnership with Baltimore Crisis Response Inc. and the Baltimore City Fire Department that run the 911 call center, to expand even further the types of calls that are eligible for diversion to 988. Despite threats to federal funding to support this critical work, the city must prioritize these vital lifesaving services, which can—at the end—be a more efficient and cost-saving use of public funds.

We also urge city officials to conduct a comprehensive review of the police-involved deaths of Ms. Brooks and Mr. Melton, and share the results publicly, including at a Behavioral Health Collaborative public meeting.

III. BPD has made little progress in advancing community policing and engagement

Distrust between BPD officers and Baltimore city residents has been a persistent problem. The DOJ's 2016 investigative report found a significant divide between the police and many residents. Central to this divide is the perception that there are “two Baltimore's” receiving dissimilar policing services. One is affluent and predominantly white, while the other is impoverished and largely Black.²³

To address this problem, the consent decree requires the BPD to develop and implement community policing and engagement strategies.²⁴ While the BPD has

²⁰ *United States v. Police Department of Baltimore, et al.*, Notice of Agreement regarding Baltimore City's Obligations Pursuant to Paragraph 97 of the Consent Decree, (Sep. 19, 2023), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59db8644e45a7c08738ca2f1/t/65babd3cc613565851074c68/1706736957061/643+-+Notice+re+Paragraph+97+%281%29.pdf>.

²¹ U.S. Dept. of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Investigation of the Baltimore City Police Department* 22 (Aug. 10, 2016), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/file/883366/download>.

²² City of Baltimore, *Consent Decree Paragraph 97 Implementation Report*, at 6 (Nov. 2024) <https://htv-prod-media.s3.amazonaws.com/files/behavioral-health-report-1124-68604f547dab6.pdf>.

²³ *Supra* note 21, at 156.

²⁴ *Consent Decree*, *Supra* note 5, 6-10.

developed community and neighborhood policing plans and is collecting data on interactions between its officers and members of the community, the court-appointed independent monitor noted that “BPD must still work to analyze the quality of these interactions and their impact on relations with the community.”²⁵

In a 2023 community survey of Baltimore residents, participants commented that BPD officers on patrol in their neighborhoods do not take the time to get to know residents and do not have a good working relationship with community members.²⁶ Another study of Black Baltimoreans’ experiences with BPD officers found that the BPD’s community policing reforms have done little to change residents’ perceptions of officers. Black Baltimoreans continue to believe that police treat them with less respect and more suspicion when compared to white Baltimoreans.²⁷

Within the context of these troubling facts, it is notable that, on the day police killed Ms. Brooks, it is reported that the city’s sole crisis response team was in the Remington neighborhood for “more than 16 hours responding to a man experiencing a behavioral crisis and threatening to jump from a 13th-floor balcony.”²⁸ Responding officers safely addressed this unidentified man in a mental or behavioral health crisis,²⁹ yet Ms. Brooks, who may have been similarly in crisis, did not survive her interaction with police. Questions remain whether officers handling Ms. Brooks’ mental or behavioral health crisis reached out to the crisis response team or other mental or behavioral health crisis response services available via 988, and, if so, the subsequent actions or inactions that took place.

IV. Baltimore’s police accountability, community oversight bodies need true independence.

²⁵ Baltimore Consent Decree Monitoring Team, *Tenth Semiannual Report*, 77 (Dec. 20, 2024), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59db8644e45a7c08738ca2f1/t/677d9e1a878d9765604b9c91/1736285724548/781+-+Tenth+Semiannual+Report+%281%29.pdf>.

²⁶ Dr. Natasha C. Pratt-Harris, *The Community’s Experiences and Perceptions of the Baltimore City Police Department Survey Draft Report*, IRB #18/09-0230, The Institute for Urban Research and Dept of Sociology, Anthropology, and (Criminology and Criminal Justice), Morgan State University, 34 (Jun. 30, 2023), <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59db8644e45a7c08738ca2f1/t/6542d4cd78396716f28facac/1698878672235/647+-+Community+Survey+.pdf>.

²⁷ Brooklynn K. Hitchens and Lauren C. Porter, *What can be done to improve police-community relations in Baltimore? Exploring the experiences and perspectives of Black residents*, Abell Foundation, 3 (May 2024), https://abell.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024_Abell-Foundation_Police-Community-Relations_Report_Part-1_digital.pdf.

²⁸ *Supra* note 10.

²⁹ Ryan Dickson, *Baltimore Police talk man off 13th story ledge after nearly 17 hours of negotiation*, WMAR2NEWS, (Jun. 26, 2025), <https://www.wmar2news.com/news/region/baltimore-city/baltimore-police-talk-man-off-13th-story-ledge-after-nearly-17-hours-of-negotiation>.

Independent community oversight of law enforcement's misconduct and violations of their own policies is a core pillar of police transparency and accountability, and it is essential to rebuilding public trust. The federal government's significant reduction of staff in the DOJ's Civil Rights Division, as well as its efforts to dismiss consent decrees in other cities,³⁰ signal a departure and abdication of its commitment to protect the civil rights of the nation's residents and to hold police accountable for violations of federal law. Consequently, we strongly urge you to strengthen local civilian oversight of the BPD, which is becoming more essential within the context of the current federal administration.³¹

Baltimore's Police Accountability Board (PAB) and its Administrative Charging Committee (ACC) are now our city's primary institutional entity charged with community oversight of the BPD. The PAB has a broad mandate to "improve matters of policing" and, among other things, reviews the outcomes of disciplinary matters considered by the ACC and makes recommendations for policy changes based on that review.³² The ACC reviews BPD's investigation of complaints of police misconduct and determines whether officers can be disciplined, and, if discipline is warranted, establishes the minimum disciplinary sanction for the offense.³³ Mandated by the state legislature in 2021 for all Maryland jurisdictions, Baltimore's PAB and ACC are the people's instruments for holding police accountable for their actions.

To its credit, Baltimore City quickly set up its all-civilian PAB and ACC, and they have since become models for the rest of the state. Yet they currently lack two fundamental powers that residents have been demanding even before the PAB and ACC were created. First, Baltimore's PAB, like its predecessor, the Civilian Review Board, lacks access to independent counsel. Instead, it receives legal advice from the City Solicitor's office, the same legal counsel that represents the BPD and even defends it against allegations of police misconduct. This creates an obvious conflict of interest that undermines the PAB's mission as the watchdog for ordinary Baltimoreans.³⁴ We recommend that the City expeditiously give the PAB access to its own independent counsel.

³⁰ Press Release, U.S. Dept. of Justice, *The U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division Dismisses Biden-Era Police Investigation and Proposed Police Consent Decrees in Louisville and Minneapolis*, (Mar. 21, 2025) <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/us-department-justices-civil-rights-division-dismisses-biden-era-police-investigations-and>.

³¹ See, City of Baltimore Consent Decree, *The Community Oversight Task Force's Recommendations for Strengthening Police Accountability and Police-Community Relations in Baltimore City*, (Aug. 10, 2018), <https://consentdecree.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/Final%20COTF%20Report.pdf>. The Community Oversight Task Force Report was authorized as part of the process leading to the signing of the Consent Decree.

³² MD Code Ann., Pub. Safety § 3-102(a).

³³ MD Code Ann., Pub. Safety § 3-104(c).

³⁴ This was also problematic for the Civilian Review Board in 2018 when the City Solicitor's office tried to force the CRB to sign a confidentiality agreement out of concern that their findings would damage the credibility of the BPD. ACLU testimony, City Council Bill 22-0234, "An ordinance concerning police accountability," May 18, 2022.

Second, the PAB/ACC lack independent investigatory powers. The ACC reviews over 1000 misconduct cases annually, relying entirely on the BPD's Internal Police Integrity Board for investigations of misconduct³⁵—the results of which are provided, at times, to the ACC so late that ACC cannot complete the cases before the legal deadline.³⁶ The PAB/ACC, therefore, needs independent powers of investigation—and the resources to conduct those investigations—to properly adjudicate difficult or controversial cases, to ensure the timely disposition of cases, and to bolster public confidence in their decisions. This recommendation continues the city's long history of independent investigations of misconduct by the Civilian Review Board, which had such powers when it was created in 1999.³⁷ We recommend that the City explicitly confer the independent investigatory powers, which were once possessed by the Civilian Review Board, to the PAB/ACC.

These recommended reform measures can immediately strengthen the PAB and ACC. In the long term, we further call for the establishment of an Independent Office of Police Accountability. The Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights currently houses the PAB and ACC, which provides a measure of institutional solidity and administrative efficiency for the PAB and ACC. However, looking forward, an all-civilian office with its own staff and capacity to allocate its own funds will best serve the residents of Baltimore City.³⁸

Thank you for considering our concerns, questions, and suggestions. The federal administration's striking abdication of prior commitments to existing consent decrees—and the related depletion of DOJ staffing to enforce Baltimore's consent decree, along with the administration's recent executive order that encourages aggressive policing,³⁹ the city's responsibilities to ensure constitutional policing and true public safety for all residents are even more important. We thus greatly appreciate the expressed commitment from the BPD, City officials, and the court appointed monitoring team to this agreement.⁴⁰ In addition, this year's full restoration of local control over the BPD to

³⁵ Ben Conarck, *Frustrations with civilian oversight of Baltimore police are boiling over*, BALT. BANNER, (Dec. 2, 2024), <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/criminal-justice/police-accountability-board-independence-O5ZFCTAPK5EA5DYHS3NNB2DHOM/>.

³⁶ The Maryland General Assembly has taken steps to address this problem by passing a law that extends the timeline for law enforcement agencies to conduct an investigation of a police complaint filed by a member of the public and gives the ACC 30 days from the day it receives the investigative file from the law enforcement agency to review it and make a determination or request more information. The new law becomes effective October 1, 2025. See, S.B. 533, *2025 Leg., 446th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Md. 2005)*, available at https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/chapters_noln/Ch_493_sbo533E.pdf.

³⁷ City of Baltimore, Civilian Review Board By-Laws, (Mar. 22, 2023), <https://civilrights.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/CRB%20Bylaws%20Approved%202023.3.22.pdf>.

³⁸ *Supra* note 31, 11, 14-15, 23. The Community Oversight Task Force report discusses the success of this model in other cities.

³⁹ Exec. Order No. 14288, Strengthening and Unleashing America's Law Enforcement to Pursue Criminals and Protect Innocent Citizens, 90 Fed. Reg. No. 84, 18765 (Apr. 28, 2025).

⁴⁰ Ben Conarck, *An exodus at Trump's DOJ is threatening to unravel Baltimore's federal police Oversight*, BALT. BANNER, (May 5, 2025), <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/community/criminal-justice/baltimore-police-consent-decree-trump-6YF5EBSEX5EQDATI4DHTJUUNK4/>.

Baltimore's elected officials could not be more timely as residents rely more on local government to protect their rights in light of the federal government's abandonment of its enforcement responsibilities.

We look forward to working with you to use elected officials' new powers of local control effectively. In this difficult moment, we call on you to work closely together to exercise oversight of BPD and to continue to ensure that the people of Baltimore have a seat at the table as we build a public safety system responsive to the needs of all residents.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss our concerns and recommendations. Please do not hesitate to contact Kristina Roth, kruth@naacpldf.org, Donna Brown, donna.brown@cpproject.org, or Monique Dixon, m.dixon@law.umaryland.law with any questions or concerns or if you would like to schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

Campaign for Justice, Safety, and Jobs

CASA

Citizens Policing Project

Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law

Jews United for Justice-Baltimore

NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)

Organizing Black

cc: Richard Worley, Commissioner, Baltimore Police Department

Chauna Brocht, Director, Crisis Services, Behavioral Health Systems Baltimore

Kenneth Thompson, Monitor, Baltimore City Police Department Monitoring Team