



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MCCA CALLS FOR INFORMED APPROACH TO REFORM

In the aftermath of the tragic death of Mr. Floyd, legislative bodies at all levels of government have proposed a myriad of reforms to increase transparency and accountability of law enforcement. The Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) acknowledges change is necessary and as we endeavor to enact meaningful reform, we call for an approach that is evidence based, informed, comprehensive, and thoughtful. We must listen, learn, then act to effectuate change.

Several reform topics have risen to the forefront and for all 18,000 police departments across our nation, the MCCA recommends a comprehensive review of the following: ban the use of techniques that require manipulation of the neck; affirmative requirement for peace officers to immediately intervene and report acts of misconduct; preservation of life standard requirement in response to resistance (use of force) policies; mandate on-going crisis intervention training; mandate de-escalation training on a continual basis; mandate cultural competence and implicit bias training; and standardization of laws and policies governing the release of body worn camera video.

All reforms must be vetted to ensure they are sustainable and will be the meaningful impact our communities are calling for. Knee jerk reactions and absolutes are irresponsible and as we look towards legislation, we need to take care that the needs of our diverse communities are reflected in the policies put forth. Again, this is a time to listen, learn, and to act.

First and foremost, the call to defund the police in order to address the social and economic ills of our nation, prior to actually addressing our social disparities, is largely a false equivalence. As illustrated in one MCCA member city, police respond to an average of 1.2 million calls for service annually that disproportionately originate from communities of color who are already grappling with the socio-economic challenges plaguing many American communities. To simply defund the police without a concerted effort to address the root causes behind emergency calls for service is wrought with strategic missteps that could ultimately increase the need for police service in the poorest of communities. Social Psychologists have noted, calls to defund the police without making strides to improve causal factors would strip away a critical resource. Building healthy communities thereby lessening the need for police presence and

intervention must occur prior to any discussion regarding the defunding of American law enforcement¹.

Our communities deserve the highest quality service. History has shown that underfunding police can have disastrous consequences and hurt the communities most in need. Appropriate police funding is more critical now than ever before to ensure that police agencies have the funding for investments in technology that provides accountability (body worn cameras), recruitment (hiring unbiased service minded professionals), and training (cultural competency, implicit bias, de-escalation).

As a profession and a society, we have an opportunity to implement reforms that will ameliorate long standing issues. We must not squander it. The MCCA is committed to working with all stakeholders, at every level of government, and from every facet of the communities we serve, to implement reforms that hold our profession accountable and build trust with the community. We will continue to listen, learn, and act.

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The Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) is a professional organization of police executives representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada. The MCCA provides a unique forum for urban chiefs, sheriffs and other law enforcement executives to share ideas, experiences and strategies. MCCA provides a collaborative forum for the advancement of public safety through innovation, research, policy development, government engagement, community outreach, and leadership development.

Contact: Laura Cooper, Executive Director, Major Cites Chiefs Association (908) 268-2298

¹Sault, S. "To fix racism we need to start measuring it, says this psychologist." <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/this-psychologist-is-using-science-to-beat-racism/> (2020, January 23).