



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

April 30th, 2019

The Honorable José Serrano
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Representative Serrano and Representative Aderholt:

The Major Cities Chiefs Association, representing the Nation's largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies, would like to voice strong opposition to the proposed restructuring of the Community Relations Service (CRS) at the U.S. Department of Justice.

The President's Budget proposes to transfer CRS' activities to the Civil Rights Division and we ask you to reject this recommendation.

CRS was established by Congress to mediate community conflicts and prevent civil unrest, while the Civil Rights Division was established to investigate and prosecute violations of the Civil Rights Act. These missions are so different and contrasting that Congress has prohibited CRS from participating in investigative or prosecutorial functions. "No officer or employee of the Service shall engage in the performance of investigative or prosecuting functions of any department or agency in any litigation arising out of a dispute in which he acted on behalf of the Service." It is actually a criminal violation for CRS to engage in the work of the Civil rights Division. (Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title X, 42 U.S.C. S 20009-2). Thus, the proposed move of CRS services to the Civil Rights Division undermines the effectiveness of the agency in contradiction of the very statute that created the agency.

When faced with civil unrest, police officials and community leaders need experienced mediators to help prevent escalation of tensions and we will look to you to ensure that CRS remains able to serve in this vital role.

Sincerely,

Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department

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