



PRESS RELEASE

DC Police Union Statement on Report by Police Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Gregg Pemberton, Chairman

On April 1, 2021, the DC Police Reform Commission published a report which contains dozens of recommendations the DC Council should take under advisement in order to create new legislation to reform policing.

The one thing that is clear in the 259 pages of the report is that the Commission is clearly on a mission to defund police in the District. The dozens and dozens of extreme reforms they suggest are in line with all of the policies that many other cities have adopted this past year, to their own detriment.

What the Commission avoids talking about is that in every other jurisdiction where these reforms have been implemented, crime has skyrocketed and homicide rates have risen exponentially. In 2020, homicides increased 74% in Seattle, 72% in Minneapolis, 56% in Chicago, 52% in Portland, 39% in New York, 38% in Oakland, and 33% in Los Angeles.¹ Here in the District, homicides went up 19% in 2020, and in 2021, we are currently up another 22% from this time last year. There has also been a 350% increase in carjackings in the District.

If citizens in the District want to reverse this disturbing trend and bring safety back to their communities, they need to tell their Councilmembers to ignore the regressive and dangerous policies that are recommended in the report.

Chairman Gregg Pemberton stated, "There is very little empirical data in the report and much of it is filled with inaccuracies and misrepresentations. The Police Commission is just another entity that is focused on 'defunding' police and their recommendations will only allow criminals to proliferate in our most vulnerable neighborhoods. The report spends very little time talking about crime and the havoc and trauma it causes in communities. We will only be able to reduce crime when start focusing on victims and stop protecting criminals."

The most important section of the report is the comments of the Commissioner, Robert S. Bennet, which begin on page 190. The Commissioner writes for three pages that many of the recommendations are "dangerous", "foolhardy", and "mistakes".

This report generated by the Police Reform Commission has a recurring theme that "Policing is Harmful." Nothing could be more preposterous. Our members are tasked with the difficult job of dealing with violence and chaos every day, and every day our members handle this responsibility with respect and professionalism. Hopefully, citizens and Councilmembers alike will do what's right and ignore the detrimental recommendations in the report.

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¹ <https://www.npr.org/2021/01/06/953254623/massive-1-year-rise-in-homicide-rates-collided-with-the-pandemic-in-2020>