

**Cheryl C. Clapprood**  
**Police Commissioner**  
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**THE CITY OF  
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

May 5, 2021

████████████████████  
████████████████████  
Mass Senior Action Council  
108 Myrtle Street #112  
Quincy, MA 02171

Dear ██████████,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for the chance to give my views on police reform to the senior action group. Captain Martucci and I were pleased to be with your group.

I only hope that someday we are able to prove that we are not murderers or systemic racists or implicitly biased individuals but well-meaning, hardworking people who actually like to make positive differences in the lives of those we serve. I cannot think of a positive purpose for bringing up tragedies from twenty or more years ago, events that we all agree are tragedies. The past cannot be changed by new leadership, new boards, or reform. Delano Walker was an example given of a young man who, for whatever reason, was trying to get away from the police and went into the highway tragically losing his life.

My department is not racist, nor do we suffer from systemic racism as we save many lives weekly and we consist of the same backgrounds, races, religions, and origins as our community. My department is not implicitly biased. We are caring, intelligent and sensitive individuals from the community of a multitude of backgrounds and differences coming together to serve its' residents. It is inherently unfair to be characterized in this manner and not be able to defend ourselves because we are labeled without proof. The numbers of complaints and incidents based on racial decisions do not sustain the label of racist or biased police. Additionally, I am not exerting any "privilege" as was suggested by a participant. My rank was obtained through hard work, dedication, and many stressful, sleepless nights. I have seen the worst of people and the best of people and never have I judged based on race, sex or religion but rather on behavior and actions.

My hope is for our nation to recover to the point where everyone is treated based on his or her actions and behaviors. The police risk their lives every day and it has become very difficult to retain good officers and recruit good people for this job. Until there is a backup plan for an armed security force of some kind, society needs the police. We need to protect the life and liberty of law abiding the citizens the best we can so our kids have the chance to grow up and be whatever they wish to become. Until the day comes where robots patrol the streets to stop robberies, pocketbook snatches, home invasions, stop drug dealing and help with traffic control, we need police. We are going to uncover and prosecute any police who are there for the wrong reasons, abuse their power and take advantage of the authority given them. To that end, we count on Mayors, civilians, disciplinary boards and the criminal justice system to keep them in check.

Unfortunately, I believe a good opportunity was lost to have a meaningful discussion on reform and community relations.

Most sincerely,

Cheryl C. Clapprood  
Police Commissioner