



Commonwealth of Virginia

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RICHMOND

June 11, 2020

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay
Supervisor Daniel T. Storck
Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22032

Mayor Justin M. Wilson
City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Chairman Libby Garvey
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: United States Park Police Reforms

Dear Chairmen McKay and Garvey, Mayor Wilson, Supervisors Storck and Lusk:

As you know, on Monday, June 1, 2020, the United States Park Police (USPP) used tear gas on citizens at Lafayette Square who were peacefully exercising their constitutional rights prior to any curfew. While clearing the crowd, they also assaulted a journalist who was taking video of the event.

The next day, they issued a public statement denying the use of teargas. This was later contradicted by WUSA 9 who found a teargas canister which caused USPP public relations officer, Sgt. Eduardo Delgado to acknowledge the use of teargas who was then contradicted by Acting Chief Gregory T. Monahan.

The day before, on May 31, 2020 a recent West Potomac H.S. graduate and area resident, Michael Cunningham, was killed in a single car accident on the George Washington Memorial Parkway ("the Parkway") near the Mount Vernon Estate where two other individuals were injured. As of this writing, we do not believe a statement has ever been issued by the USPP about the fatal accident. One reporter we are aware of made an inquiry and received a two-sentence response which did not even identify the victim.

On September 13, 2019, a different fatal accident occurred about half a mile further north near the Stratford Landing interchange on the Parkway. As of today, the USPP still has not released the name of the driver who was killed.

Finally, we are all aware of the situation involving Bijan Ghaisar who was shot 10 times including 4 times in the head about two blocks from my house on November 17, 2017. Mr. Ghaisar was

unarmed, a victim of a minor traffic accident, and it has been confirmed that his pursuit and the shooting violated numerous USPP policies. Very little explanation has been given about that incident.

The USPP public statements seem to be driven more by political considerations and self-interest rather than building public trust. The Department also appears to operate under a set of principles which are wholly inconsistent with the traditions, restrictions, oversight and transparency that the citizens of Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria expect of law enforcement. There seems to be very little training, oversight or control of its officers. The USPP transparency practices are non-existent.

While the USPP operates under the oversight of federal authorities, they do have a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County Police which also shares jurisdiction with the Parkway.

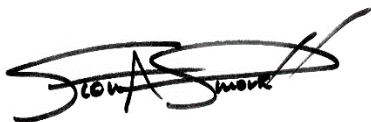
We are aware that Arlington County withdrew its officers after the Lafayette Square incident and are currently reviewing their MOU. However, we would ask that your jurisdictions terminate your memoranda of understanding with the USPP until your local police chief has certified the following:

- That all USPP officers have completed diversity training;
- That all USPP officers have completed de-escalation training;
- That the USPP has a functional disciplinary process that is substantially similar and either equal to or more rigorous than those in use in our local departments;
- That the USPP has adopted policies requiring transparency practices public incidents that are as robust or more robust than currently utilized by your departments.
- Devise and implement team approaches to de-escalation and restraint situations that stress appropriate roles to insure that someone is focused on speaking up if policy and procedure are not being followed, to prevent over reaction and potential criminal conduct.

Your MOUs are the only leverage we have to effect change on these issues and the only measures that we can utilize to ensure that the rights and safety of our area residents is being maintained in a fair fashion.

Thank you for considering this request.

Very Truly Yours,




Senator Scott A. Surovell
36th District



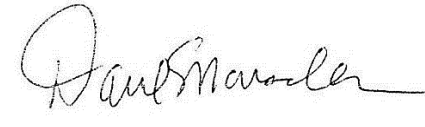
Delegate Paul E. Krizek
44th District



Senator J. Chapman Petersen
34th District



Delegate Patrick A. Hope
47th District



Senator David W. Marsden
37th District



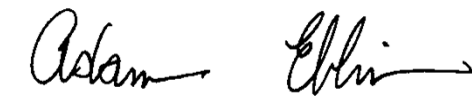
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42nd District




Senator Barbara A. Favola
31st District




Delegate Kaye Kory
38th District




Senator Adam P. Ebbin
30th District



Delegate Vivian E. Watts
39th District



Senator Jennifer B. Boysko
33rd District



Delegate Mark H. Levine
45th District

cc: U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner
Congressman Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Congressman Gerald E. Connolly
Congresswoman Jennifer T. Wexton