



**NEWARK COMMUNITIES FOR**

**ACCOUNTABLE POLICING**

March 19, 2015

Vanita Gupta  
Acting Assistant Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Paul J. Fishman  
United States Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Suite 700  
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Acting Assistant Attorney General Gupta and U.S. Attorney Fishman:

The steering committee of Newark Communities for Accountable Policing (N-CAP)<sup>1</sup> thanks you for your commitment to ensuring that the civil rights of all Newarkers are recognized and respected.

From our review of the consent decree processes in other cities across the country, we know that a qualified and community-engaged independent monitor is essential to the success of reforms addressing patterns and practices of constitutional violations by police departments. In light of the pending selection of a federal monitor to oversee the consent decree between the City of Newark and the U.S. Department of Justice, we respectfully ask the Department of Justice to help ensure that the selection process is open and transparent, and that Newark communities have a seat at the table.

As you know, the choice of the monitor will play a significant role in the pace of reform, in building a culture of respect and mutual understanding between police and communities, and in the involvement of communities in that process. The selection criteria should incorporate the concerns of Newark communities, which will then ensure the selection of a capable and qualified team of experts who will serve the interests of Newark residents, in addition to the parties to the consent decree, in building a safer, stronger, and more resilient city.

Therefore, we respectfully request a more transparent selection process, and one that provides a role for Newark residents to voice their opinions. Specifically, we request that the names of the applicants, the selection timetable, and the criteria for evaluating the applicants be made public. Once the applicant names are made public, N-CAP will seek to solicit proposals from monitoring candidate teams about each team's plans for community engagement and participation in the

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<sup>1</sup> The N-CAP Steering Committee includes 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, Ironbound Community Corporation, NAACP of New Jersey State Conference, New Jersey Communities United, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, Newark LGBTQ Community Center, Newark NAACP, and People's Organization for Progress.

reform process, in addition to other areas of interest to N-CAP. As was done in Albuquerque, New Mexico, N-CAP is considering public endorsements of monitor applicant teams.

We are eager to work with you and the City of Newark to develop and execute a fair and effective transparency strategy that incorporates the voices and opinions of Newark's residents in the selection of a federal monitor. Given the urgency of the matter, we respectfully request a response from your office by March 27, 2015. Please contact Rashawn Davis by phone at (973) 854-1730 or by email at [rdavis@aclu-nj.org](mailto:rdavis@aclu-nj.org). Thank you again for your continued work on behalf of civil rights in Newark.

Sincerely,

Newark Communities for Accountable Policing

cc: Willie Parker, Corporation Counsel, City of Newark  
Mayor Ras J. Baraka, City of Newark