

March 1, 2016

Newark Municipal Council
Newark City Hall
920 Broad Street
Newark, NJ 07102

Re: Vote Yes on Ordinance No. 16-0276 – Civilian Oversight of Newark Police

Dear Members of the Newark Municipal Council:

We write to urge your support for Ordinance No. 16-0276, which would establish strong, independent, and responsible civilian oversight over the Newark Police Department for the first time in the City's history.

Newark communities have been fighting for a civilian complaint review board (CCRB) for more than 50 years. Despite decades of promises of reform and false starts, it's finally time for Newark to build mechanisms for police accountability and transparency that will be effective and sustainable.

Meaningful civilian oversight of the police will bolster public safety *and* civil rights.

In particular, the unique CCRB proposed in Newark would establish a model that communities around New Jersey—and the country—could emulate. The carefully-crafted ordinance draws on lessons learned from oversight bodies around the country to ensure fair, professional investigations of police misconduct allegations, independent review of police policies and practices, a functional and transparent disciplinary system, enhanced data transparency within the police department, and the empowerment of the Newark community to become a true partner in community safety. At the same time, police officers' due process rights will be fully protected, including the right to counsel, fair hearings, and to appeal decisions.

At a time when community trust in the police continues to suffer in Newark and across the country, Newark can and should become a national leader by forging this path of safety, accountability, and justice. Newark can be the light that shows the way.

Please vote yes to build a more respectful, accountable, and transparent police department.

Sincerely,

1199 SEIU
32BJ SEIU
ACLU of New Jersey
American Friends Service Committee
Black Lives Matter NJ
Boys and Girls Club of Newark

NAACP New Jersey State Conference
NAACP Newark Branch
National Police Accountability Project
New Jersey Communities United
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
New Jersey Working Families Alliance

Campaign Zero
Faith in New Jersey
Garden State Equality
Ironbound Community Corporation
La Casa de Don Pedro
Latino Leadership Alliance of New Jersey
LatinoJustice
Million Woman Movement:
Black Women Defense League-Newark

New Jersey Red Umbrella Alliance
Newark Anti-Violence Coalition
Newark Communities for Accountable Policing
Parents Educating Parents
People's Organization for Progress
Seton Hall Law School Center for Social Justice