



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

April 20, 2021

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

**RE: CC# 21-0033R Investigative Hearing- Women in Public Safety:
Leveling the Playing Field**

Dear Council President Mosby and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) has reviewed Council Resolution 21-0033R which is for the purpose of requesting that the Chief of the Baltimore City Fire Department, the Commissioner of the Baltimore Police Department, and the Director of the Department of Human Resources come before the Baltimore City Council to provide information about their agencies' strategy to recruit, retain, mentor and promote more women.

The Department appreciates and shares Councilwoman McCray's commitment to increasing the amount of women employed by the Baltimore Police Department. As is noted in the resolution, nationally, women currently make up only 12% of sworn officers and 3% of police leadership in the United States. While BPD is leading the national average with female sworn officers at BPD representing 16% of the department, those numbers are especially poignant when looked at in light of new research which has shown that typically female officers use less force; are perceived more favorably by the communities they serve; and tend to see better outcomes for crime victims, especially in sexual assault cases.

Understanding that BPD needs to increase the amount of women at every rank, Commissioner Harrison has signed on to the 30x30 Pledge to send a clear message that he intends to have every recruit class be comprised of 30 percent of women by 2030. Meeting this goal will ensure that women in law enforcement will continue to have a significant impact on the culture of policing and contributions made to the profession.

The Pledge is the foundational effort of the 30x30 Initiative – a coalition of police leaders, researchers, and professional organizations who have joined together to advance the representation and experiences of women in all ranks of policing across the United States. The 30x30 Initiative is affiliated with the Policing Project at NYU School of Law and the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE).

In 2019, the department released a digital marketing campaign geared towards attracting more police officer candidates from Baltimore City, as well as more women and minorities. In the ad, the department invited a new generation of officers to, "Be part of the greatest comeback story in America." The campaign doubled the number of applications in 2020, with the department hiring 223 officers, the most hires in 12 years. In 2020, 16% of all new hires were females, while minorities represented 62%, and Baltimore City residents represented 32% of all of the new hires.

We look forward to briefing the Public Safety and Government Operations Committee on specific actions that the BPD is taking to increase the amount of women at every rank in the Department.

Thank you for allowing us to weigh in on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Wirzberger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Wirzberger, Esq.
Director of Government Affairs

cc: Natwana Austin, Executive Secretary of the Baltimore City Council
Natasha Mehu, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
Nina Themalis, Special Assistant and Legislative Liaison, MOGR
Brittany Lewis, Chief of Government Affairs, Office of the Council President
Eric Melancon, BPD Chief of Staff
Andrew Smullian, BPD Deputy Chief of Staff

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