

My name is Alayna and I am a constituent of Odette Ramos. As a taxpayer of Baltimore city and an employee of the Pratt library, I care deeply for my neighbors and community members. Every day I see people work hard to take care of their families and live with joy and safety. Every day I watch cruel and unnecessary barriers to justice and happiness working against Black people in Baltimore. The police in this city don't prevent harm and violence, they respond to it after the fact. And their response is violent. It perpetuates violence. I want the money I give back to this city through my taxes to go toward measures that prevent harm and hardship, not cause it. Right now I feel complicit in the pain of my neighbors and community members because my taxes pay for their oppression at the hands of the BPD. What would Baltimore look like if my tax dollars went toward free housing and health care for everyone instead of toward heavily armed men and women living outside our city who drive in every day to surveil and murder my neighbors? Might investing security, safety, health, and education prevent more harm and violence? I hope that you, the elected representatives of our incredible city, will choose to be courageous in your stewardship and decision-making. I urge you to defund the BPD.