

I'd like to submit my testimony in opposition to the final proposed budget for Baltimore City FY 2022. I am pleased to see the total funding for Baltimore Police Department has decreased since the first Baltimore City Taxpayers' night, but that reduction is nowhere near enough. I demand that BPD's budget be cut even further. The only excuse the taxpayers have received for the increase in budget from this year to last, despite community calls for defunding, is that retirements must be funded. While that may be the case, active policing budgets could and should be cut to decrease the overall agency funding. We need to invest more in Baltimore City community services, including education, affordable housing, youth services, and others. I stand in solidarity with Organizing Black's calls to remove police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other issues that do not require police presence.