

Good evening.

My name is Martin Kasey, and I am resident of Charles Village.

I'll never forget over a decade ago when I was arrested after I talked back to a cop when he pushed my girlfriend on her fire escape while busting a party at her house. I was loaded into a wagon that spent the whole night going around and provoking homeless people and people coming out of clubs until the van was packed with folks who hadn't committed any crimes. Urine was sloshing around on the floor. When we got to Central Booking, I heard the ranking officer loudly counting all of us and telling the employee "These are all mine! Do you have that down?" I spent the night with about eleven other people in a cell meant for four, and in the morning everyone from the van and everyone in my cell were released without charges, because noone had broken the law.

As a Baltimore city resident, I echo Organizing Black and CJSJ's demand that \$100 million dollars be cut from BPD's budget and invested into Black communities, the creation of a \$30 million dollar community wellness trust fund to be governed through a participatory budgeting process, and the removal of police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other quality-of-life issues.

Thank you.

Organizing Black's Demands

- 1. We demand the defunding of the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD).**
 - 2. We demand the creation of a Community Wellness trust fund.**
 - 3. We demand investment into Black communities.**
 - 4. We demand the removal of police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other quality-of-life issues.**
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1. The constant growth of BPD's budget has not correlated into a decrease in crime or harm and has only fed surveillance and police violence in Black and brown communities.
 - a. Defund the Baltimore City Police Department. **We demand that 100 million dollars be cut from BPD's budget.**
 - b. Baltimore spends more per capita on police than any major city in the country - \$880 - logic would say Baltimore should be the safest city in the country. And we are far from that.

- c.
- 2. Create a Community Wellness trust fund. **We demand a \$30 million dollar investment into a community wellness trust fund** to be governed through a participatory budgeting process.
 - a. Baltimoreans are more than capable of identifying what public safety looks like without increased police presence or surveillance tools.
- 3. Invest in Black communities. We demand that \$70 million dollars be allocated to support quality, affordable housing, high-quality public education, universal healthcare, jobs, a universal basic income, and community programs.
 - a. The proposed FY22 budget cuts \$15 million dollars from our public schools and education grants.
 - b. Black children deserve a high-quality education, not incarceration and punishment
- 4. Remove police entirely from responses to mental health distress, substance use, sex work, homelessness, and other quality-of-life issues. We demand Baltimore create an alternative to 911 that does not dispatch police to connect people in crisis with the mental health, housing, treatment and/or harm reduction resources they need to live with dignity.
 - a. **The role of the police is too expansive.** There are better ways to meet many of the functions that they serve without armed police.
 - i. Invest in alternatives for mental health crisis response.
 - ii. Create alternatives for routine traffic enforcement.
 - 1. Eliminate traffic and car stops. Often, citations can be mailed to people's homes.
 - iii. Invest in community-based alternatives for addressing harm and promoting accountability.
 - b. Despite a continuing rate of opioid overdose deaths, the budget for mental health and substance abuse stayed virtually the same. (\$4.7M or 1% of the BPD Budget)
 - c. There was a great increase in emergency medical services (\$35M), but again this is waiting until bad things happen instead of caring for the health and wellness of our communities

FY22 Budget numbers

- 555.5M for the Baltimore City Police Department, a 5.2% and **27.5 million dollar increase** from the 528 million dollars allocated in FY2021.
 - The proposed FY22 budget **cuts \$15 million dollars from our public schools** and education grants.
 - **The police budget costs each tax payer \$880** - by far the most per capita in the country
 - 26 cents of every general expenditure dollar goes to BPD
 - 23.2% of all staff working for the city work for the police department.
 - \$66.1M additional general fund dollars directly supports the apparatus of policing.
 - Baltimore City Sheriff's Office: \$21,740,262
 - Law - Police Legal Affairs: \$2,150,559
 - CitiWatch (Crime Cameras): \$2,941,312
 - Office of Equity and Civil Rights - Police Community Relations: \$729,172
 - State's Attorney - \$38,527,258
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