



May 20, 2019

New York City Charter Revision Commission
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Dear New York City Charter Revision Commissioners:

I am the President of the National Association for the Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and I write to submit testimony as part of the 2019 Charter Revision Commission's May hearings.

NACOLE is a nonprofit organization that brings together individuals and agencies working to establish or improve law enforcement oversight in the United States. NACOLE welcomes people and organizations committed to fair and professional law enforcement that is responsive to community needs. NACOLE represents approximately 70 civilian oversight agencies of all types across the United States and about 1,000 individuals who work in civilian oversight as staff, board members, and other capacities. In addition, while carrying out our mission to enhance fair and professional law enforcement that is responsive to community needs, NACOLE provides member support and resources to new and existing oversight agencies.

As I testified at your March 7, 2019 hearing on police accountability, my philosophy around civilian oversight is that law enforcement agencies and community members have the same goal: peaceful and just communities. Where that falls short, civilian oversight is necessary. For civilian oversight to be successful, it must be within an agency that has independence, a sufficient budget, and appropriate access.

The best practice to ensure independence and a sufficient budget is to peg the law enforcement oversight agency's budget to the larger agency it is meant to monitor. In the wake of the police killing of Laquan McDonald in 2014, Chicago ensured its police oversight body receives this sustained, protected funding. Miami's City Charter also requires a Civilian Investigative panel that receives no less than 1% of the city's Police Department budget. New York City now has the opportunity to adopt this critical funding structure for its exceptional law enforcement oversight agencies.

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I write to urge the Commission to endorse the staff recommendation to extend budget protections to the City's law enforcement oversight agencies. Through our national lens, I can tell you that the Board of Correction is one of few top oversight agencies in the country and are leaders in the growing movement for civilian oversight of correctional institutions. They are leaders in both thought and practice for strong and effective independent oversight. Independent budgets are necessary to solidify the independence of these agencies, strengthen their ability to meet their community and legislative mandates, and, ultimately, improve our communities and the police and corrections departments therein.

I truly appreciated the opportunity to testify before you and hope that you find this additional testimony helpful. Should you have questions or wish to consult with NACOLE on this matter please feel free to contact me directly by phone or email at (617)254-8331 or bcorr@nacole.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Corr', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brian Corr
President