



February 27, 2024

The Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety Performance Oversight Hearing on Metropolitan Police Department

Councilmember Pinto and members of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee:

We are the Steering Committee of Metro DC Democratic Socialists of America (MDC DSA), testifying on behalf of over 2,000 DC chapter members. The Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) has shown time and time again that it cannot keep DC safe and is committed only to killing and endangering DC residents. In light of this undeniable reality, we urge the Council to take steps that will actually keep the DC community safe. Our testimony explains:

1. MPD does not keep DC safe.
2. At a minimum, Council should reject the most harmful provisions of Secure DC.
3. Council should address the root causes of violence.
4. Council should decriminalize personal possession of drugs.
5. Council should remove police from traffic enforcement
6. Council should remove all police from schools.

1. MPD does not keep DC safe.

DC has the most police per capita of any major U.S. city,¹ yet we continue to face organized abandonment regarding access to food, housing, healthcare, education, and other essential goods and services.

- **Food apartheid:** Residents in majority-Black Wards 7 and 8 (who make up 20% of DC's population), **have only 3 full-service grocery stores,**² while the other six wards enjoy 72 full-service grocery stores.³
- **Housing injustice:** In 2019, DC was ranked the most intensely gentrified city in the entire country.⁴ **DC has nearly 5,000 unhoused community members (up 12% from 2022), with 50% of them experiencing homelessness for the first time.**⁵ **Some tenants have faced rental increases of as high as 33% this year—despite their landlords being sued by the Attorney General for colluding to inflate rent prices.**⁶
- **Health crisis:** Around **100** residents in the District continue to be hospitalized each day due to COVID-19,⁷ yet DC permanently shut down all COVID centers in 2023.⁸
- **School-to-prison pipeline:** Children in DC go to schools with more police officers than guidance counselors and three times as many security guards as psychologists, which teaches them that they are threats to be contained rather than young people deserving of care and love.⁹

¹ Eliana Block, *VERIFY: Does DC have more police per capita than any other US city?* WUSA9 (July 15, 2020), <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/verify/verify-does-dc-have-more-police-per-capita-than-any-other-us-city/65-9fae328a-5da3-4e0f-8e54-009f48b97b57>.

² Lindiwe Vilakazi & Sam P.K. Collins, *Residents in Wards 7 and 8 Struggle with Food Insecurity Amid Grocery Store Shortage* (Sept. 13, 2023), <https://www.washingtoninformer.com/residents-in-wards-7-and-8-struggle-with-food-insecurity-amid-grocery-store-shortage>.

³ Vanessa G. Sánchez, *Black-owned stores work to end D.C.'s food deserts*, Washington Post (July 7, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/07/07/dc-food-deserts-anacostia>.

⁴ Cordilia James, *D.C. Has Had the Most Gentrifying Neighborhoods In The Country, Study Finds*, DCist (Mar. 19, 2019), <https://dcist.com/story/19/03/19/d-c-has-had-the-most-gentrifying-neighborhoods-in-the-country-study-finds>.

⁵ Sarah Y. Kim, *Homelessness In D.C. Increases For The First Time In Years*, DCist (May 5, 2023), <https://dcist.com/story/23/05/05/dc-homelessness-increase-2023-pit-count>.

⁶ Rafael Sanchez-Cruz, *DC tenant says her rent is being increased by 33% despite lawsuit against landlords*, WUSA9 (Jan. 23, 2024), <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/local/dc-tenant-rent-is-being-increased-by-700-despite-lawsuit-against-landlords/65-355c8bf5-ca5b-4df1-a631-b786a1032e67>.

⁷ *Tracking Coronavirus in Washington, D.C.*, New York Times (last updated Feb. 9, 2024), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/us/washington-district-of-columbia-covid-cases.html>.

⁸ Executive Office of the Mayor, *DC Health Announces COVID Centers Will Close on March 31* (Mar. 3, 2023), <https://mayor.dc.gov/release/dc-health-announces-covid-centers-will-close-march-31>.

⁹ District of Columbia Police Reform Commission, *Decentering Police to Improve Public Safety: A Report of the DC Police Reform Commission* 18 (Apr. 1, 2021), <https://dccouncil.gov/police-reform-commission-full-report> [hereinafter Police Reform Commission Report].

- **Utility debt and shutoffs:** Pepco, the owner of DC's electrical utilities, brought in \$32.9 million in revenue in January 2024, while 22% of households were behind on their electricity bills. Moreover, 595 DC households, including 48 low-income households, were cut off from their electricity in the middle of winter.¹⁰

The safest places have the most resources. As the Council's Police Reform Commission has recognized: "Violence is most pervasive and takes its greatest toll in areas of the District where predominantly Black and Brown residents have the least access to wealth."¹¹

For example, it is no coincidence that 40% of all gun violence in DC takes place in one square mile (2% of the city) in Southeast DC, in one of the most neglected, policed, and criminalized places in the District.¹² In fact, rates of gun violence in Southeast, where police are rampant, are more than 10 times higher than in Northwest DC, where communities have far more resources and support and far fewer cops.¹³ These statistics demonstrate that not only are police not a solution to the problem of violence, but they also actually *contribute* to it. On the other hand, research repeatedly shows that when all of our neighbors have their basic needs met – affordable housing, well-funded schools, youth programs, job training, trauma-informed healthcare, and other community services – gun violence is lower and we are all safer.¹⁴

In contrast, MPD systemically and egregiously abuses our community—especially our Black neighbors:

- **Killings:** Since 2015, police officers in DC have fatally shot 28 of our community members.¹⁵ and killed and injured many more using other methods, such as fatal vehicular chases. Black people are 12 times more likely to be killed by police than white people in DC.¹⁶
- **Jailing Black residents:** MPD overwhelmingly targets Black people for arrest and incarceration: 87% of people held at DC jail are Black, and 52% are being held without a conviction.¹⁷
- **Torturing children:** Children arrested by MPD often await trial in solitary confinement—an internationally recognized form of torture—for up to 23 hours per day for days at a time.¹⁸
- **Domestic abuse:** During 2009-19, MPD found that at least 64 officers had committed crimes, including serious domestic abuse, and sought to terminate 24 of them. But a panel led by former MPD Chief Robert Contee ensured that only 3 of the 64 officers were fired.¹⁹
- **Surveilling Black activists:** During 2011-17, MPD emails flagged Black and anti-racist organizations at ~12 times the rate of Nazi and white supremacist organizations. In 2022, an MPD officer was put on leave for helping the Proud Boys locate anti-racist activists.²⁰
- **Surveilling children of color:** MPD's "gang database" has nearly 2,000 DC residents, with Black and Latinx residents making up 94% of database members who show a race.²¹ At one point, 19% of those who showed an age were minors, with some as young as 10 years old when they were added.²²

¹⁰ Letter from Dennis P. Jamouneau, Ass't Att'y Gen., Pepco to Brinda Westbrook-Sedgwick, Comm'n Sec'y, DC Public Service Comm'n, Re: ARDIR – Information on Disconnections for Non-Payment, Enclosure 1-2 (Feb. 20, 2024), <https://edocket.dcpso.org/apis/api/Filing/download?attachId=200795&guidFileName=8934dad2-0f89-4edf-aada-e01df0252cae.pdf>.

¹¹ Police Reform Commission Report, *supra* note 9, at 76.

¹² Peter Hermann & John D. Harden, *Thousands of bullets have been fired in this D.C. neighborhood. Fear is part of everyday life.*, Washington Post (July 23, 2021), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/07/22/shooting-increase-dc-gun-violence>.

¹³ Police Reform Commission Report, *supra* note 9, at 76.

¹⁴ *Community Gun Violence*, The Educational Fund To Stop Gun Violence (Feb. 2021), <https://efsgv.org/learn/type-of-gun-violence/community-gun-violence>.

¹⁵ *1,141 people have been shot and killed by police in the past 12 months*, Washington Post (last updated Feb. 7, 2024), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/investigations/police-shootings-database> (excluding Ashli Babbitt, a J6 insurgent).

¹⁶ Campaign Zero, *Mapping Police Violence* (last updated Jan. 28, 2024), <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org>.

¹⁷ DC Department of Corrections Facts and Figures October 2023 9, 17 (Oct. 27, 2023), <https://doc.dc.gov/node/344892>.

¹⁸ Jenny Gathright & Colleen Grablick, *'Why is my child always on lockdown?': Confinement at D.C.'s youth jail worries parents, advocates*, WAMU (July 24, 2023), <https://wamu.org/story/23/07/24/confinement-at-dc-youth-jail-has-parents-worried>.

¹⁹ Dhruv Mehrotra et al., *D.C. Police Tried To Fire 24 Current Officers For 'Criminal Offenses.' A Powerful Panel Blocked Nearly Every One*, Documents Show, DCist (Dec. 18, 2021), <https://dcist.com/story/21/12/18/dc-police-panel-blocked-mpd-firings>.

²⁰ Creede Newton, *D.C. Police Closely Watched Anti-Racist Groups For Years*, Southern Poverty Law Center (Dec. 23, 2021), <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2021/12/23/dc-police-closely-watched-anti-racist-groups-years>.

²¹ Peter Hermann, *Study by civil rights group says D.C. police gang database is unreliable*, Washington Post (Jan. 16, 2024), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2024/01/16/gang-data-police-dc>.

²² Chris Gelardi, *More Kids and Overwhelmingly Black: New Records Show Concerning Trends in D.C. Gang Database*, Intercept (Jan. 9, 2022), <https://theintercept.com/2022/01/09/dc-police-gang-database-mpd>.

- **“Rage-induced policing”:** During 2012-13, MPD’s Robbery Intervention Program spent 75% of its time in Wards 7 and 8 harassing and arresting Black residents for conduct like standing near a metro station or “pausing in dark areas.” RIP officers jokingly called themselves the “Rage Induced Policing” unit.²³

Despite this egregious track record, MPD receives half a billion dollars every year²⁴—70 times more than violence interrupters,²⁵ despite being up to 5 times less effective in preventing gun violence.²⁶

In fact, alarmingly, in FY 2024, the District government allocated more in local funds to MPD’s operating budget than to all of the following agencies *combined*:²⁷

- Department of Parks and Recreation
- DC Public Library
- Department of Employment Services
- Teachers’ Retirement System
- Unemployment Compensation Fund
- Office of the Tenant Advocate
- Office of the People’s Counsel
- Office of Human Rights
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Energy & Environment

2. At a minimum, Council should reject the most harmful provisions of Secure DC.

MPD’s systemic failures make us all the more alarmed by the Secure DC Omnibus Amendment Act—a hyper-carceral piece of legislation that harkens back to the racist 1994 federal crime bill and is deeply rooted in punishment and mass incarceration. Secure DC never should have been introduced. Thanks to massive public opposition earlier this month, the current version of the bill is less egregious.

We urge Council to retain all amendments passed during the first reading.

In addition, we urge Council to, at a minimum, make the following changes to Secure DC:

- **No drug-free zones.** The Council should not revive drug-free zones, which were unanimously repealed in 2014 because they were understood to be unconstitutional and enforced in a racially discriminatory way. These zones do not reduce drug use or sales and only make it easier for police to harass and arrest Black residents. There is no reason to bring drug-free zones back.
- **No anti-mask law.** The Council should not revive its overbroad anti-mask law, which was unanimously repealed in 2021 because it was allowing police to target mostly Black residents for wearing things like hoodies. The Police Reform Commission recommended making this repeal permanent. There is no reason to bring the anti-mask law back.
- **No deadly chases.** The Council should prohibit vehicular pursuits if the suspect poses no immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury to anyone or if there is a likelihood of death or serious bodily injury to anyone, including the suspect. These protections were put in place in 2021 after police chases killed two young Black men, Jeffrey Price and Karon Hylton-Brown. They should not be removed.
- **No longer sentences.** The Council should not lengthen prison sentences. Secure DC would create inconsistent, unscientific changes to the criminal code that will lead to disproportionate and excessive sentences. For example, under Secure DC, taking someone’s car keys from their hands would result in a harsher penalty than second-degree murder.

²³ Chris Gelardi, ‘Rage Induced Policing’: Hacked Documents Reveal D.C. Police’s Aggressive Robbery Crackdowns, The Appeal (Dec. 6, 2021), <https://theappeal.org/dc-police-robbery-crackdown-leaked-emails>.

²⁴ Office of Chief Financial Officer, 2024 FA0 Metropolitan Police Department, Chapter, 1 (Jul. 14, 2023), <https://cfo.dc.gov/node/1650941> (MPD received \$525 million in FY 2024).

²⁵ Scott Taylor, *SEE IT | 7News rides along with a violence interrupter in one of DC’s most dangerous neighborhoods*, WJLA.com (Sept. 18, 2023),

<https://wjla.com/features/i-team/dc-crime-violence-interrupter-curtis-brothers-washington-mpd-metropolitan-police-department-district-6-summer-dangerous-heat-loud-music-drugs-gang-activity-guns-shootings> (violence interrupters received \$7.5 million in FY 2024).

²⁶ Christopher Robbins, *The Plight of the Violence Interruptors*, *Intelligencer* (July 13, 2021), <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/07/the-plight-of-new-york-citys-violence-interruptors.html>.

²⁷ In FY 2024, the Council allocated \$482 million in combined “Local funds” to these agencies, compared with MPD’s \$486 million. See DC Office of Chief Financial Officer, *Approved Fiscal Year 2024 Budget by Agency Cluster* (last visited Feb. 11, 2024), <https://cfo.dc.gov/page/approved-fiscal-year-2024-budget-agency-cluster>.

- **No body camera previews.** The Council should not allow police to view body-worn camera footage before writing their initial reports. The Police Reform Commission has recommended prohibiting this practice because it makes it easier for police to lie.
- **Cops out of metro.** The Council should remove the provision that allows Metro Transit Police to detain riders who do not give their full name and address when being cited for fare evasion. Fare evasion is a civil (not criminal) infraction, and riders who break civil laws should not be subjected to additional surveillance that will put them at higher risk of criminalization and incarceration.

3. Council should address the root causes of violence.

In light of MPD's systemic failures, we urge the Council to adopt non-carceral alternatives to public safety:

- **End poverty:** Give \$750 monthly stipends to Black families in Wards 7 and 8 with children below age 10 and household incomes below \$50,000, as recommended by the DC government's Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan.²⁸ In addition, create a Violence Intervention Worker Training Academy to train outreach workers and violence interrupters and create new jobs, again as recommended by the DC government's Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan.²⁹ Poverty is violence.
- **End hunger:** Expand access to fresh, nutritious food in DC, especially by increasing the number of full-service grocery stores in Wards 7 and 8. Hunger is violence.
- **End homelessness:** Invest in Permanent Supportive Housing, the single most effective solution for helping people experiencing chronic homelessness, with a 92% success rate in DC.³⁰ Homelessness is violence.
- **End evictions:** Pass the [Green New Deal For Housing Amendment Act](#), which would foster the growth of District-owned mixed-income housing, with at least 2/3 of units designated as family units and as permanently affordable units for extremely-, very-, and low-income households. In addition, resist the real estate lobby's gluttonous attempts to roll back the Tenant Opportunity Purchase Act, which has been critical developing and preserving more than 16,000 affordable units over the past 40 years.³¹ Eviction is violence.
- **End utility debt and shutoffs:** Replace DC's billion-dollar, investor-owned utilities company with a publicly owned municipal utility system without utility debt or shutoffs. A democratic, transparent utility system would be directly accountable to all residents, utility workers, and those most vulnerable to climate injustice, giving us more power to interrupt cycles of debt and anxiety. We should not allow corporations to walk away with profits while our communities struggle to make ends meet.
- **End police violence:** Support [#SafeAndFreeDC](#), a Black-led legislative agenda that includes ending pretrial detention, qualified immunity, jump-outs, solitary confinement, and racial profiling; limiting search warrants and traffic stops; and developing a proposal for reparations. In addition, take cops out of mental health and overdose response; a gun cannot help someone experiencing these crises, and cops should never be called to these situations. Police violence is violence.

Furthermore, we urge Council to adopt the additional measures detailed below to decriminalize the District and promote true public safety.

4. Council should decriminalize personal possession of drugs.

In DC, Black Washingtonians are simultaneously at greatest risk of dying from a drug overdose and being criminalized for drug possession. In FY 2022, 576 DC residents (the vast majority of whom were Black) died from accidental drug overdose.³² In the first 10 months of 2023, 427 of our neighbors died from accidental opioid overdose.³³ At 119 deaths per 100,000 people, the overdose mortality rate among Black Washingtonians is the

²⁸ District of Columbia, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, *Gun Violence Reduction Strategic Plan 22* (Apr. 2022), <https://cjcc.dc.gov/page/cjcc-releases-gun-violence-reduction-strategic-plan>.

²⁹ *Id.* at 16.

³⁰ Miriam's Kitchen, *Advocacy* (last visited Feb. 12, 2024), <https://www.miriamskitchen.org/programs/advocacy>.

³¹ <https://cnhed.org/news/cnhed-releases-comprehensive-analysis-of-dcs-tenant-opportunity-to-purchase-act-topa>.

³² District of Columbia, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, *Drug-related Fatal Overdoses: January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022* (Dec. 19, 2022), available at <https://ocme.dc.gov/publication/epidemiology-and-surveillance-reports>.

³³ District of Columbia, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, *Opioid-related Fatal Overdoses: January 1, 2017 to October 31, 2023* (Jan. 17, 2024), available at <https://ocme.dc.gov/publication/epidemiology-and-surveillance-reports>.

second highest in the United States and nearly 10 times higher than that of their white neighbors.³⁴ At the same time, Black Washingtonians are almost 7 times more likely than their peers to be arrested for drug possession – despite the fact that DC residents of all races use drugs at similar rates.³⁵

Drug criminalization is dangerous—even fatal. Formerly incarcerated people are 40 times more likely than the general population to die from a drug overdose within the first two weeks of release and 10 times more likely within a year after release.³⁶ Criminalization forces people to use drugs in riskier settings, discourages overdose victims from seeking help, and perpetuates stigma against them healthcare and social workers. Criminalized people can find it difficult or impossible to secure jobs, occupational licenses, public benefits, student financial aid, and other essential services – which can, in turn, exacerbate problematic drug use.

In contrast, drug decriminalization saves lives. When Oregon decriminalized the personal possession of drugs in 2020, the state saw a 60% decrease in the number of drug-related arrests³⁷ and estimated a 96% reduction in Black-white disparities in drug convictions.³⁸ Similarly, since Portugal decriminalized personal drug use in 2001, it has seen rates of drug use and drug-related deaths consistently far below the European Union average.³⁹ And when our neighbors in Baltimore City, Maryland stopped prosecuting drug possession and other low-level offenses in March 2020 to prevent overcrowding in jails during COVID-19, there was no increase in 911 calls regarding drugs and almost no rearrests for serious crimes, such as robbery and assault, over a 14-month period.⁴⁰

It's time for DC to end the racist War on Drugs once and for all. We urge the Council to pass the DecrimPovertyDC Coalition's [Drug Policy Reform Act](#) to remove criminal penalties for personal use quantities of drugs, invest in an evidence-based harm reduction infrastructure (including 24/7 harm reduction centers), and address the life-long consequences of drug-related convictions.

5. Council should remove police from traffic enforcement.

MPD's traffic enforcement has harmed DC residents, especially Black Washingtonians. In just the last few years, MPD fatally chased Jeffrey Price (22) for alleged speeding,⁴¹ fatally chased Karon Hylton-Brown (20) for allegedly not wearing a helmet,⁴² and killed An'Twan Gilmore (27) after approaching him because he had fallen asleep in his stopped car at 2:45 AM.⁴³ Even in non-fatal traffic incidents, MPD has caused serious physical, legal, and economic injuries. Broken brake or tail lights and other minor infractions are often used as pretext to pull poorer and vulnerable residents into the criminal legal system and can escalate into sudden police violence.⁴⁴ Notably, **in the first half of 2023**, Black residents made up **71%** of traffic stops based on equipment violations, despite making up only 43% of DC's population.⁴⁵

³⁴ Kaiser Family Foundation, *Drug Overdose Death Rate (per 100,000 population) by Race/Ethnicity: 2021* (last visited Feb. 12, 2024), <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/drug-overdose-death-rate-per-100000-population-by-race-ethnicity>.

³⁵ Colleen Grablick, *D.C.'s opioid arrests reflect racial disparities*, WAMU (Sept. 6, 2022), <https://www.npr.org/local/305/2022/09/06/1121299701/d-c-s-opioid-arrests-reflect-racial-disparities>.

³⁶ Prison Policy Initiative, *Visuals: Recently Incarcerated People are Over 40 Times More Likely to Die from an Opioid Overdose* (last visited Mar. 6, 2023), https://www.prisonpolicy.org/graphs/postrelease_opioid_overdose.html.

³⁷ Matt Sutton, *One Year of Drug Decriminalization in Oregon: Early Results Show 16,000 People Have Accessed Services Through Measure 110 Funding & Thousands Have Avoided Arrest* (Feb. 1, 2022), <https://drugpolicy.org/press-release/2022/02/one-year-drug-decriminalization-oregon-early-results-show-16000-people-have>.

³⁸ Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, *IP 44 Racial and Ethnic Impact Statement* 3-5 (July 16, 2020), <https://maps.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/IP44-Racial-and-Ethnic-Impact-Analysis.pdf>.

³⁹ Transform Drug Policy Foundation, *Decriminalisation in Portugal: Setting the Record Straight* (May 13, 2021), <https://transformdrugs.org/blog/drug-decriminalisation-in-portugal-setting-the-record-straight>.

⁴⁰ Saba Rouhani et al., *Evaluation of Prosecutorial Policy Reforms Eliminating Criminal Penalties for Drug Possession and Sex Work in Baltimore, Maryland*, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Department of Health, Behavior and Society 3 (2021), <https://jhufilship.prod.acquia-sites.com/sites/default/files/2022-01/prosecutorial-policy-evaluation-report-20211019-accessibility.pdf>.

⁴¹ Natalie Delgadillo, *Family Of Man Killed In Crash With D.C. Police Sues City*, DCist (Mar. 4, 2020), <https://dcist.com/story/20/03/04/family-of-man-killed-in-crash-with-d-c-police-sues-city>.

⁴² Paul Wagner & Gina Cook, *DC Police Officers Found Guilty in Karon Hylton-Brown's Death*, NBC (Dec. 21, 2022), <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/dc-police-officers-found-guilty-in-karon-hylton-browns-death/3235652>.

⁴³ Editorial Board, *The D.C. police shooting of Antwan Gilmore raises troubling questions*, Washington Post (Aug. 28, 2021), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/08/28/antwan-gilmore-shooting-dc-troubling-questions>.

⁴⁴ Police Reform Commission Report, *supra* note 9, at 102.

⁴⁵ Calculated by MDC DSA. See Metropolitan Police Department, *Stop Data* (Jan. 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023), <https://mpdc.dc.gov/stopdata>.

Traffic enforcement does not require police. If a DC resident's car has a broken light or exhaust system, a Department of Transportation (DDOT) worker should help fix it. The safest ways to address traffic problems like speeding and accidents are to invest in more speed bumps, pedestrian-only zones, bike lanes, and public transit, including by fully funding the Metro For D.C. Amendment Act of 2022.

Non-police traffic enforcement is already working. Virginia and major cities like Philadelphia, Seattle, and Los Angeles have all banned stops for minor traffic violations.⁴⁶ During a four-year period, Hoboken, New Jersey had zero traffic deaths, all thanks to urban planning and non-police interventions.⁴⁷ Other cities across the United States like Berkeley, California and Cambridge, Massachusetts have also considered moving traffic enforcement from their police departments to their departments of transportation.⁴⁸

It's time to rethink traffic safety and promote real safety in our streets. We urge the Council to:

- Prohibit MPD from issuing tickets for traffic violations that do not pose an immediate danger to public safety, as recommended by the District Task Force on Jails & Justice.⁴⁹
- Transfer enforcement of all traffic violations that do not imminently threaten public safety from MPD to DDOT, as recommended by the Council's Police Reform Commission.⁵⁰
- Fully fund the **Metro For D.C. Amendment Act of 2022** to reduce reliance on cars altogether.

6. Council should remove all police from schools.

School police push Black and brown students into the school-to-prison pipeline. In DC, nearly 100% of school-based arrests are of youth of color.⁵¹ Black girls in DC are more than 30 times more likely to be arrested than white children of any gender.⁵² They are also highly vulnerable to police sexual assault, the second most frequently reported form of police misconduct (after excessive force),⁵³ committed at more than double that of the general public.⁵⁴ The truth is that "school resource officer" is a dangerous misnomer. **School police are not "resources."** They are violent and deprive students of actual resources.

Students deserve care, not criminalization. We urge the Council to:

- Return to its plan to remove all police from schools by 2025
- Pass the [School Safety Enhancement Amendment Act of 2023](#), which would fund school safety directors in every school and establish school safety teams that promote non-carceral interventions like restorative justice programs, mediation, de-escalation, and violence interruption.

* * * * *

In conclusion, we urge the Council to invest in non-carceral solutions to address the root causes of violence.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our requests. Please reach out to steering-all@mdcdsa.org with any questions.

Steering Committee

⁴⁶ David D. Kirkpatrick, Steve Eder & Kim Barker, *Cities Try to Turn the Tide on Police Traffic Stops*, New York Times (Apr. 15, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/us/police-traffic-stops.html>.

⁴⁷ Christopher Robbins, *Hoboken Hasn't Had a Traffic Death in Four Years. What's It Doing Right?*, Curbed (June 17, 2020), <https://www.curbed.com/2022/06/hoboken-traffic-deaths-none-vision-zero-streets.html>.

⁴⁸ Brett Simpson, *Why Cars Don't Deserve the Right of Way*, The Atlantic (Oct. 15, 2021), <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/10/end-police-violence-get-rid-traffic-cop/620378>; Arianna MacNeill, *Cambridge is considering shifting 'routine traffic enforcement' away from police. Here's what to know.*, Boston.com (July 30, 2020), <https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2020/07/30/cambridge-routine-traffic-enforcement-proposal>.

⁴⁹ District Task Force on Jails & Justice, *Jails & Justice: Our Transformation Starts Today* 35 (Feb. 2021), <https://www.courtexcellence.org/uploads/publications/TransformationStartsToday.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Police Reform Commission Report, *supra* note 9, at 21, 93.

⁵¹ Jenny Gathright, *In The Middle Of A Pandemic And Protests, D.C.'s Young Black Voters Head To The Polls* (June 2, 2020), <https://www.npr.org/local/305/2020/06/02/867943601/in-the-middle-of-a-pandemic-and-protests-d-c-s-young-black-voters-head-to-the-polls>.

⁵² Rights4Girls and the Georgetown Juvenile Justice Initiative, *Beyond the Walls: A Look at Girls in D.C.'s Juvenile Justice System* 29 (Mar. 2018), <https://rights4girls.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/r4g/2018/03/BeyondTheWalls-Final.pdf>.

⁵³ Andrea Ritchie, *How some cops use the badge to commit sex crimes*, Washington Post (Jan. 12, 2018), https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/how-some-cops-use-the-badge-to-commit-sex-crimes/2018/01/11/5606fb26-eff3-11e7-b390-a36dc3fa2842_story.html.

⁵⁴ Cato Institute, *National Police Misconduct Reporting Project, 2010 Annual Report* 3 (2010), <https://perma.cc/CU9X-UYRY>.

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