February 7th, 2022

Los Angeles City Council
President of the Council Nury Martinez
President Pro Tempore Mitch O'Farrell
Councilmember Gil Cedillo
Councilmember Paul Krekorian
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember Nithya Raman
Councilmember Paul Koretz
Councilmember Monica Rodriguez
Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Councilmember Curren Price
Office of City Council District 10
Councilmember Mike Bonin
Councilmember John Lee
Councilmember Kevin de León
Councilmember Joe Buscaino

RE: LAPD TVTP Grant

Councilmembers:

We, the undersigned organizations, demand that the LA City Council reject the Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention grant for $250,000 from the Department of Homeland Security. Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) is a rebrand of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), and this grant will be used to fund a program called Providing Alternatives to Hinder Extremism (PATHE), which is itself a rebrand of LAPD's program Recognizing Extremist Network Early Warnings (RENEW), instituted under LA's pilot program for CVE. In 2018, the community successfully forced the mayor of LA to reject a $425,000 grant to expand and continue LA's CVE program, in large part due to a landmark statement by the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) unequivocally rejecting Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and a related program called Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE). Despite this outpouring of opposition, the LAPD has now violated the demands of the communities of Los Angeles by attempting to accept this $250,000 grant from the Department of Homeland Security to expand this program. They want to use this money to create a 500-person team of spies and informants by training "community members" - including educators and social workers, to monitor people using a risk assessment tool and report on "suspicious behaviors." This deputization of educators and counselors as informants weaponizes the trust between students and the adults meant to support them. Teachers have repeatedly rejected these programs as well. Not only did UTLA wholeheartedly oppose CVE and PVE, but the

American Federation of Teachers (AFT), in opposition to a similar program instituted by the FBI, highlighted its harmful impact on youth, their families, and their communities.

PATHE is not an ideologically-neutral violence prevention program. We've seen implementations of CVE programs in Minnesota similar to PATHE result in the targeting of Black Muslim, East African, Somali and Native Youth. The racist intent of these programs would only be compounded by the racist LAPD. PATHE will be headed by Alex Vargas, the deputy director of LA's fusion center, a cop who oversaw the surveillance of protests in LA during the uprisings for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and who claims to be an expert in "Sunni extremism". Alex Vargas has trained at an Israeli counterterrorism center, learning counterterrorism strategies that were tested on Palestinians under occupation. CVE as a framework for policing (of which PATHE is an example) has been developed with support and collaboration with Zionist organizations. While claiming to only take behaviors into account, PATHE is also a powerful tool for political repression and wholesale targeting of communities. A PATHE questionnaire obtained by the ACLU through a records request asks "Do you have a religious community affiliation?" and "Do you have a political or other community affiliation?" and "Do you have animosity towards any religious, community or political group?".

PATHE is rooted in the behavioral surveillance of Suspicious Activity Reporting and the iWATCH program, which the police falsely claim has been a "huge success." In fact, this program was repeatedly shown in LAPD OIG audits to be a license to racially profile, with Black people vastly over-represented among Suspicious Activity Reports, and the majority of the reports not even meeting law enforcement's own basic standards.

PATHE is also grounded in radicalization theory, the presumption that monitoring behaviors using risk assessments can indicate which individuals are on a "pathway to violence." This program provides the police and their informants the ability to profile and target community members by criminalizing ordinary behaviors as well as political organizing, which will target Muslim, Black, Brown, Indigenous, Immigrant, youth and communities, unhoused people, disabled people, political organizing, and liberation movements, and it will contribute to the deportation pipeline.

Finally, this grant is another cash grab for the LAPD, temporarily funding a program that the LAPD will inevitably demand public money for later, contributing to LAPD's constant budget creep and ignoring calls from the community to defund the police. The LAPD has already demanded a $213 million dollar budget increase and now they want even more money for more surveillance. The community demands that the Los Angeles City Council reject this grant and permanently terminate the PATHE program.

Stop the LAPD from going around the community's back. We rejected this program in 2018 and we reject it again today, and will continue to fight all programs that target our community and our youth as "extremists."

Signed,

Stop LAPD Spying Coalition
United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA)
California Faculty Association, Los Angeles (SEIU Local 1983)
Black Lives Matter - LA
Palestinian Youth Movement LA-OC-IE Chapter
Vigilant Love

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Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)
Students Deserve
Black Lives Matter Youth Vanguard
International Indigenous Youth Council LA
Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)
Youth Justice Coalition (YJC)
Union del Barrio
MSA West
SAALT
MuslimArc
For the Binat
White People 4 Black Lives
UCLA Center of the Study of Racism, Social Justice, and Health
UCLA/CDU COVID-19 Racism and Equity Taskforce
ACLU of Southern California
Reimagine Public Safety USC
Anakbayan LA
California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC)
We the Unhoused
Streetwatch LA
Mar Vista Voice
Western Regional Advocacy Project
NOlympics LA
The Feminist Front
Jewish Voice for Peace-Los Angeles
The Sidewalk Project
Ground Game LA
Muslim Justice League
Defending Rights and Dissent
Justice for Muslims Collective
HEART Women and Girls
CAIR LA
LatinxFacutly4BLM
Angeles Workshop School
Palms Unhoused Mutual Aid (PUMA)
Neurodivergent-U
JTown Action & Solidarity
Armenian-American Action Network
People's City Council