



THE COUNCIL OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO

Endorsement of Consent Decree Concerning the Chicago Police Department

25 October 2018

The Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, representing more than 30 religious communities in this Region, endorses the consent decree between the State of Illinois and the City of Chicago regarding the Chicago Police Department.

We share the Agreement's goals to strengthen respect for the rights of the people of Chicago, to build trust between CPD officers and the communities they serve, and to promote both officer and community safety (§2). We embrace the Agreement's dual commitment to the rights and needs of both the residents of all communities in Chicago and the officers sworn to serve and protect them.

In particular, we support the following parts of the Agreement:

- We endorse the Agreement's commitment to Community Policing (Part II) and Impartial Policing (Part III). We further support the commitment to providing "police services to all members of the public without bias and will treat all persons with the courtesy and dignity which is inherently due every person as a human being without reference to stereotype based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, homeless status, national origin, immigration status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, age, disability, incarceration status, or criminal history" (§50).
- We endorse the Agreement's delineations regarding Use of Force (Part VI) and the renewed emphasis of CPD on de-escalation as a core principle. This commitment affirms that the rights and very lives of every Chicagoan matter and will be respected. We agree with the proposed guidelines for using force and for reporting the use of force by officers on duty.
- We also endorse the Agreement's commitment to Officer Wellness and Support (Part IX). In an era when our city faces a renewed surge in gun violence, we have an obligation to support those in public service who suffer the moral, emotional, and physical challenges of upholding the law under demanding and frequently dangerous circumstances.
- Finally, we endorse the Agreement's many proposals for Accountability and Transparency (Part X). We believe that trust between the community and police is the foundation of effective policing. The Agreement's consistent emphasis on documentation, reporting, and analysis is a necessary step in service to more effective, more transparent, and more accountable policing.

The Council supports this Agreement as a necessary mechanism for advancing these goals. The rights of ordinary citizens, the needs of police officers, and the welfare of our communities cannot be a matter of simple bargaining. The Agreement offers an essential catalyst for implementing these recommendations and a neutral standard for measuring their effectiveness.

Our Council was founded more than 30 years ago to improve the quality of our collective spirit at a time of great polarization in this city. We believe that this Agreement represents an opportunity to create the necessary trust, transparency, and accountability that are essential if we are to overcome such divisions in Chicago today. We pray that it inaugurates a time of change and hope for the benefit of us all.