

Chairman Hershman, subcommittee chairs and members of the Commission, it is my duty and obligation to speak to you this evening about your charge and the issues we all feel deeply about.

My name is Lawrence Bussey, resident of Reston for more than 35 years and active participant in local and county civic organizations. I am a founding and current member of the Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee—School Board advisory group and officer NAACP Fairfax Branch but I am here as a private citizen.

Most people who speak at these kinds of hearings have a “beef” with the host or a personal “axe to grind” and I want to say that I am proud to live in such an enlightened and progressive County and support the work that you all are doing.

I have some concerns about the context of public safety and criminal justice in the County and would share some recommendations for the Commission to consider. I want to address disproportionality and accountability and transparency.

First I believe that the County has race-neutral policies with respect the criminal justice but disproportionate outcomes. For example, with respect to our Black and Hispanic youth there are disproportionate contacts with the juvenile justice system.

- After Arlington County, Fairfax has the highest rate of Black referrals to juvenile court. So for every White youth, there are nearly 4 Black youth referred.
- After Loudoun County, Fairfax has the lowest diversion rates for both Black and Hispanic youth. For every White youth diverted from juvenile court in Fairfax, .64 and .60 Black and Hispanic youth are diverted.
- Black youth are 10 % of the County’s population yet they are 27% of the referrals and 37% of detentions.
- Hispanic youth are 17% of the County’s population yet they are 27% of referrals and 36% of detentions.

- These rates have been increasing since 2004 according to County reports.

Second we need better accountability and transparency with respect to policing. The Internal Affairs Annual Statistical Report for 2013 noted that there were 443 use of force incidents recorded.

- Of the 66 excessive uses of force incidents, only two were sustained.
- Of the 568 investigations, 238 (45%) of the charges were sustained.
- These resulted in oral and written reprimands suspensions, termination and resignation.
- Mount Vernon District showed the highest number of employees for which complaints were filed against.

Internal Affairs is needed but we must have an independent Civilian Review Board.

Disproportionate incarceration, disparate policing practices, and racially biased, discriminatory, and mandatory minimum sentencing must end. Incarceration will be greatly reduced and communities will be safer. The following are my recommendations for the Commission:

- Independent Civilian Review Board
- Examine racial profiling and discriminatory practices—traffic stops, community contacts, diversion programs
- Disproportionate racial prosecution and the discriminatory use of bail against the poor
- Focus on law enforcement trust and integrity
- Video Surveillance
- Youth Gangs and disproportionate contact of Black and Hispanic Youth with law enforcement