

A People's Budget

1 message

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To: Bob Blumenfield <bob.blumenfield@lacity.org>, Clerk.BudgetandFinanceCommittee@lacity.org, councilmember.krekorian@lacity.org, councilmember.Lee@lacity.org, councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org, councilmember.bonin@lacity.org, councilmember.buscaino@lacity.org, councilmember.cedillo@lacity.org, councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org, councilmember.martinez@lacity.org, councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org, councilmember.price@lacity.org, councilmember.rodriguez@lacity.org, councilmember.wesson@lacity.org, curren.price@lacity.org, david.ryu@lacity.org, mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org, mike.bonin@lacity.org, paul.koretz@lacity.org, paul.krekorian@lacity.org

Hi all,

I want to thank you all for your progress towards systemic change in our city. Over the course of a month, \$150 million has been cut from the LAPD's budget, unarmed non-police response is being established for non-violent emergency calls, there's been a motion to bar police from traffic and transportation stops, and finally there's a 35% cut to the LAUSD police. These are all wonderful steps toward a brighter future for our city and you should all be very proud.

However, this isn't enough. These are all wonderful first steps, but the work needed is far from over. Dismantling administrations built upon systematic racism isn't an easy task, but it is a necessary one we all must reckon with in order to move forward as a society. When our system fails to hold bad cops accountable, we have no choice but to defund the police, and sadly a cut of \$150 is negligible when you consider the overall percentage of the budget given to the LAPD. Adopting the People's Budget put forth by BLM LA is vital to a bright future for Los Angeles. Unlike the Mayor's budget, which — even with cuts and proposed reapportionments — gives more than half of unrestricted funds to the LAPD, the People's Budget LA gives only 5.7% to the police. Tax payer dollars should prioritize universal needs (such as housing, childcare, healthy food, clear air and water), pandemic recovery, built environment, and reimagined public safety over the police department. You need to engage directly with communities, especially Black and Indigenous communities — the most at risk of police brutality and murder — to create a budget that serves ALL Angelenos.

Throughout this time of mass protest, the police have reacted with extreme violence and unwarranted escalation towards peaceful protestors and our unhoused neighbors. LAPD Commander Cory Palka flashed a White Power signal on television. Chief Moore blamed the police murder of George Floyd on LA protestors. Many police officers have hurt, abused and maimed. These officers make a mockery of the promise to protect and serve, and they need to be held accountable for their actions. An independent investigation needs to be launched to bring the perpetrators of police brutality to justice. Anything less than defunding the LAPD and punishing the officers responsible for inciting violence is shameful.

However, I know that peaceful protestors aren't the only ones who have a reason to fear the LAPD. It has been brought to my attention that the LAPD and the Police Unions are doing everything in their power to intimidate you all as well into giving into their demands. These aren't actions very becoming of an officer of the law. These are the actions of a bully. The behavior of the LAPD is unacceptable, and the only way to stop them is to defund them immediately. Please, I urge you all not to give into their intimidation tactics. Please support the People's Budget LA to help the people of this city.

Thank you all for your continued service during this time of crisis over COVID-19. Stay safe and stay healthy!

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All the best,
Megan Salinas