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## **Testimony of the Civilian Complaint Review Board before the New York City Charter Revision Commission**

**March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

My name is Dr. Mohammad Khalid, and I am the Interim Chair of the Civilian Complaint Review Board, an independent city agency that investigates and prosecutes complaints of misconduct filed by civilians against the NYPD. I thank the Charter Revision Commission for the opportunity to address the proposed changes to the City Charter to strengthen police accountability.

The CCRB plays a vital role in New York City's public safety ecosystem, but its effectiveness is hindered by current policy limitations and insufficient funding. To address these challenges, I am advocating for four critical reforms: increasing the CCRB's budget to at least one percent of the NYPD's total budget, granting direct access to evidence in NYPD's possession, providing the CCRB with final disciplinary authority in cases of police misconduct, and increasing the number of board members.

The CCRB is responsible for overseeing the largest police force in the United States, with more than 36,000 uniformed members. As a national leader in civilian oversight, the CCRB is known for the rigor and scope of its investigations. In other cities, such as Chicago and Miami, oversight entities have budgets tied proportionally to the law enforcement departments they oversee. To align with these best practices, the CCRB should receive at least one percent of the NYPD's budget. This significant increase in funding would enable the CCRB to operate at the level that New Yorkers deserve. Allocating at least one percent of the NYPD's budget to the CCRB is an investment in both oversight and public trust.

Direct access to body-worn camera footage and other relevant investigative materials is essential to ensuring thorough and independent oversight. Allowing investigators to review footage and documents without delay, in compliance with federal and state law, would prevent hold-ups that obstruct timely justice for both civilians and officers. Even though the NYPD has made great strides in providing timely access to evidence, especially body worn camera footage, direct access to evidence would increase public confidence in the independence and fairness of CCRB's investigations.

Empowering the CCRB with final disciplinary authority is crucial for establishing truly independent oversight. Currently, the Police Commissioner has the sole authority to modify or reject the Board's disciplinary recommendations. This policy erodes public confidence in the accountability process. Granting the Board final disciplinary authority would send a strong message that New York City is committed to robust and independent civilian oversight.

Finally, expanding the Board would enhance its capacity to evaluate cases efficiently and reduce the current backlog. More members would bring a wider range of expertise and ensure that cases are considered from diverse perspectives. This expansion would not only accelerate the process but also improve the quality of oversight, ultimately building greater public trust and ensuring accountability.

Each of these reforms — securing at least one percent of the NYPD's budget, granting direct access to evidence in NYPD's possession, giving the CCRB final disciplinary authority, and expanding the Board — is vital to creating a system of accountability that meets the needs of New Yorkers. The CCRB cannot fulfill its mission without the necessary resources, authority, and independence to hold the NYPD accountable. Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.