



THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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Speaker Adams' Testimony before the Civilian Complaint Review Board

Good afternoon. I am Adrienne Adams, Speaker of the New York City Council. Thank you Chair Arva Rice and members of the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) for providing the opportunity to testify today in support of the proposed rules that will significantly expand CCRB's authority to investigate certain complaints. Nearly 30 years after the CCRB was established in its current form to investigate police misconduct, the CCRB will finally have the authority to investigate complaints of bias-based policing, racial profiling and to self-initiate complaints.

Local Law 47 of 2021 was passed by the Council last year after an investigation uncovered racist behavior by a deputy inspector who was second in command of the Police Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Division. While the CCRB has historically handled complaints in categories of excessive force,

abuse of authority, discourtesy, and offensive language, there was no CCRB recourse for a complainant who experienced bias-based policing, unless offensive language was used. In those instances, the policing complaints would be directed to the NYPD's Internal Affairs Bureau, and the offensive language would be sent for investigation to CCRB, creating a bifurcated, confusing system for complainants.

Local Law 24 of 2022, which I sponsored, was passed by the Council late last year as well. This legislation provides a critical tool to the CCRB in the ongoing fight against racial profiling and bias-based policing. The CCRB no longer has to wait for someone to file a complaint – it can now undertake its own investigation based on footage that it has come across. At a time when interactions between members of the public and law enforcement are increasingly filmed by bystanders and released to the Internet, this is a critical tool in ensuring oversight and protection of the public from illegal policing tactics.

From 2014-2021, NYPD received and investigated over 3400 profiling or bias-biased policing allegations and substantiated a

total of 4 of those allegations. These new laws and the proposed rules that are before the CCRB today would likely change that ratio going forward.

The proposed rules currently before the CCRB would implement the laws that the Council passed last year to hold law enforcement accountable. The proposed rules also update some of the CCRB's terms in a manner that would allow case dispositions to be more easily understood and accessible to the general public, such as the change from the terms "unsubstantiated" to "unable to determine" and from "exonerated" to "within NYPD guidelines." These updates allow CCRB to better serve New Yorkers and help guide them through the difficult complaint process.

Racial profiling and biased-based policing practices have no place in our city. I fully support these rules that provide the CCRB with the tools needed to investigate allegations of any such abuses. I look forward to monitoring the effects that these laws have on our city and seeing their full implementation once these rules are finalized.