

Testimony from Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte
CCRB Special Public Meeting to Discuss NYPD Disciplinary Matrix

September 17, 2020

Chair Davie,

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on the NYPD disciplinary matrix at today's public meeting.

The deep-seeded need for police reform has been brought to the forefront of our agenda by recent events. The mission of the CCRB, to oversee the NYPD and review civilian complaints of misconduct, is one we need to fulfill today more than ever, so that police-community relations can be healed. I thank you for your efforts to see that through and ensure justice is meted out.

I believe the matrix needs to a) include a mechanism for collecting data on racial profiling, and b) require police officers to identify themselves to the public and impose a penalty, deemed appropriate by the CCRB, for those that do not comply.

One goal of the matrix is to increase public transparency, but when there is no data, there is no transparency.

Racial profiling is punishable by termination under the matrix, but there is currently no requirement that officers collect data on the race of each and every person that is stopped by the police. The fact that the data is limited hinders the Board's ability to effectively review complaints and make a determination in cases of racial profiling, because the Board cannot truly see which officers are using race as a determination of who gets stopped.

We also saw, during the protests this summer, that many officers were hiding their badge numbers. I ask the CCRB and NYPD to consider imposing stricter penalties for police officers who intentionally fail to identify themselves by obscuring their shield numbers. It is obvious this is a widespread problem, and that the current penalty is not serving as a significant enough deterrent. Officers who obscure their badge numbers hinder the heart of CCRB's mission, and I fear that may be the intent. If formal measures are not taken to prevent this from happening, it will reflect badly on the entire department.

In the Assembly, I have sponsored legislation that would help to correct for these inequities in policing. I truly believe that if we work together, we can build better community-police relations.

Sincerely,
Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte