

The Maryland Coalition for Justice and Equality

*c/o Douglas Memorial Community Church
1325 Madison Ave. – Baltimore, MD 21217*

April 24, 2015

The Hon. Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr., Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

In response to the many concerns around interactions between law enforcement and the public, as well as the specific concerns around the recent incidents of injury or death while in police custody, community leaders, advocates and persons of good will join together to make the following request of the Governor of Maryland, Larry Hogan.

The Maryland Coalition of Justice and Equality asks your consideration of the following requests:

1. Direct the Attorney General, Brian Frosh to begin an independent investigation into the incidents of injury and/or death of persons while in police custody across the State, and any other reported instances of injury or death of civilian or officer in the performance of police duties. Such a synthesis and analysis should include a view towards patterns of policing and opportunities to prevent future tragedies. This includes providing necessary resources to the Office of the Attorney General to carry out this review.
2. Call for a Special Session of the General Assembly to develop and pass a more comprehensive body camera bill than what was passed in session, as well as review and assess whether the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights has been utilized and administered in ways that run counter to the legislative intent and to the harm of the citizens of the State of Maryland.
3. The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention convene a Blue-ribbon panel to review the incidents outlined above (and others, as appropriate), and formulate recommendations for executive action and potential legislative remedy.
4. As it relates to the structural factors that reinforce the conditions that lead to stressors in the relationship between police and community, utilize the full resources at your disposal to support and assist in the development of a thorough, comprehensive urban redevelopment strategy that will target the concerns of housing, education, employment and economic viability that put communities at risk. This includes the need to support the leadership

development of indigenous community leaders who will anchor the community moving forward. We ask that additional resourcing be made available to support such an initiative in the Sandtown-Winchester community of Baltimore City, which has been adversely impacted by lack of significant resource and investment to help residents become economically self-sufficient.

Governor, the public confidence in the mission and integrity of the law enforcement function is essential if our communities are to be healthy and safe. The recent events in Baltimore City and across the State of Maryland have again raised concerns about the public safety function and the structural health of communities that are often dealing with a number of issues that contribute to false perceptions about the residents of these communities, excessive, inappropriate, and counterproductive policing, and too often serious injury and loss of life. Governor, we appeal to your wisdom and sense of urgency to address these important public safety and public policy concerns.

We stand ready to meet with you at a time the suits your schedule to discuss these matters in detail, and we look forward to a timely response. Feel free to reach out to Dr. S. Todd Yeary, as our point of contact at your convenience. He may be reached at 410-523-1700, or at styeary@gmail.com.

Respectfully,

Maryland Coalition of Justice and Equality

ACLU of Maryland

Associated Black Charities

Baptist Ministers Conf. of Baltimore and Vicinity

Black Church Center for Justice & Equality

CASA de Maryland

Community Churches for Community Dev.

Greater Baltimore Urban League

National Action Network, Maryland Chapter

NAACP, Baltimore City Branch

NAACP, Maryland State Conference

Rainbow PUSH Coalition