

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Police Funding in Hamilton

From: **Kelly Coxson**

Date: Wed, Jun 10, 2020 at 10:51 PM

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To: <[maureen.wilson@hamilton.ca](mailto:maureen.wilson@hamilton.ca)>, <[nrinder.nann@hamilton.ca](mailto:nrinder.nann@hamilton.ca)>, <[mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:mayor@hamilton.ca)>, <[jason.farr@hamilton.ca](mailto:jason.farr@hamilton.ca)>, <[sam.merulla@hamilton.ca](mailto:sam.merulla@hamilton.ca)>, <[chad.collins@hamilton.ca](mailto:chad.collins@hamilton.ca)>, <[tom.jackson@hamilton.ca](mailto:tom.jackson@hamilton.ca)>, <[esther.pauls@hamilton.ca](mailto:esther.pauls@hamilton.ca)>, <[ward8@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward8@hamilton.ca)>, <[brad.clark@hamilton.ca](mailto:brad.clark@hamilton.ca)>, <[maria.pearson@hamilton.ca](mailto:maria.pearson@hamilton.ca)>, <[brenda.johnson@hamilton.ca](mailto:brenda.johnson@hamilton.ca)>, <[lloyd.ferguson@hamilton.ca](mailto:lloyd.ferguson@hamilton.ca)>, <[arlene.vanderbeek@hamilton.ca](mailto:arlene.vanderbeek@hamilton.ca)>, <[terry.whitehead@hamilton.ca](mailto:terry.whitehead@hamilton.ca)>, <[judi.partridge@hamilton.ca](mailto:judi.partridge@hamilton.ca)>

Dear City Council & Mayor Eisenberger,

I am writing to you in regard to the police budget in Hamilton. While I respect and understand the need for law enforcement and policing, I think a review of how the police are funded is long overdue. Every city has social problems that need to be addressed, including criminal and dangerous activity, however it is unclear why the police have become the go-to 'solution' for everything from organized crime to complaints about homeless people loitering.

How many times do we need to hear from members of racialized communities, LGBTQ people, people living with mental illnesses or addictions, that they are targeted by the police and feel intimidated and threatened by officers? How many reports of acts of violence, sexual assault, disrespect, and other misconduct from police officers that face no consequences? At what point do we as a city say "something has to change"?

I read today that the Hamilton Police Department is looking for permission to utilize their 2019 surplus on items including weapons and vehicles. This request is so incredibly tone-deaf in our current political climate. Hamilton citizens need transit, social services, mental health resources, financial support, employment opportunities, clean neighbourhoods, better training for police....we need so many things more than guns. If for some reason the surplus HAS to stay within the police department, why can't it be used to work on improving the police force for all Hamiltonians? Training, education, and more community policing oriented positions should be higher priority for the police and City Council.

Traditional policing models keep getting higher funding, yet the underlying issues causing most crimes barely receive funding compared to the police. I want Hamilton to be ahead of the curve on this. Please think progressively and critically about what the city needs.

Thank you,

Kelly Coxson  
Ward 3 Citizen