



## 4.10 (ef)

Dear Mayor Eisenberg and Members of Council,

The students of McMaster University have called for change to the security structure on our campus, and they are calling for change in the greater Hamilton community as well. A commitment to defunding the police, and re-allocating resources to the community is an investment in a re-imagined safety plan for the city.

We need one that prioritizes community care, as opposed to criminalization and incarceration. As the McMaster Students Union, we stand with those calling for police defunding. Defunding the police means that we can invest in community care, mental health supports and community institutions. Policing and use-of-force tactics are a reactive, often violent response to an overarching societal need – investments in people and not investment in their criminalization.

We ask the council, with a Hamilton Police Services (HPS) budget of \$171 million, who is being protected by HPS?

Across Canada, Black and Indigenous peoples are disproportionately more likely to experience police violence, racial profiling and discrimination. Between 2013 and 2017, Black communities made up 4% of the Canadian population, however accounted for 70% of police shootings resulting in death or injury, and 61% of 'use-of-force' cases resulting in death. As of 2019, over one third of all RCMP lethal uses of force have killed Indigenous peoples, while Indigenous peoples in Canada account for 4.9% of the nation's population.

Across the city, we see these statistics reflected in a multitude of ways. Within Hamilton, Black, Indigenous and racialized communities are disproportionately targeted, policed and murdered by members of their own police service.

As of the 2018 Statistics Canada analysis on hate crime in Canada, Hamilton continues to have the highest hate crime statistics (per 100,000 people) in all of Canada. This comes as no surprise when we look at the violence that took place at Hamilton Pride just this past year. In the face of direct violence against the LGBTQ+ community, the service failed to protect. In the face of direct violence against the LGBTQ+ community, the response was slow, inadequate and ineffective.

So we ask again, who is being protected by the Hamilton Police Services?

If the response does not include Black, Indigenous and racialized communities, the LGBTQ+ community, persons living with mental health concerns, those who are without homes or those struggling financially – then it is failing the Hamilton population.



A commitment to defunding Hamilton Police Services is a commitment to protecting systemically marginalized populations within this city. Anything else will be complicit in the violence that vulnerable communities have and continue to face.

Regards,

The McMaster Students Union

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