

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Request to Defund the Police (please respond)

From: Sally McKay

Sent: July 20, 2020 8:07 PM

To: Office of the Mayor <mayor@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Maureen <Maureen.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; SShaw-QP@ndp.on.ca; FILOMENA.TASSI@parl.gc.ca

Cc: hwdsbkidsneedhelp@gmail.com; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Request to Defund the Police (please respond)

Dear Maureen Wilson, Fred Eisenberger, Sandy Shaw and Filomena Tassi,

I am one of your constituents, living in West Hamilton. I am writing in strong support of the Defund Hamilton Police Campaign. As a university professor and arts organiser in Hamilton, I am very concerned that our city should be safe and provide equal opportunities for everyone, including Black people, Indigenous people and People of Colour, two-spirited and LGBTQ+ people, people struggling with mental health issues, people with disabilities, people living in poverty and homeless people. Far too much money is directed toward the police, whose tactics often escalate situations and cause more harm than benefit to the most vulnerable in our society. We need to restructure by redirecting funding from police towards other community services who will better serve the needs of our citizens.

In my work as an arts organiser in Hamilton, I have frequently been in the situation where staff and volunteers are asking "who can we call, other than the police, when a member of the public attending our event or entering our space is in crisis?" We know we don't want to call the police, because we are afraid of escalating the situation and putting that person at even more risk. We have never had an adequate answer to our question. Please help us to serve our arts communities by reducing the police budget, and freeing up more funds for gentler, safer more inclusive forms of community support.

As my elected representatives, your views on this matter are important to me. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,  
Sally McKay