

From: MADISON BROCKBANK <brockbam@mcmaster.ca>

Sent: February 11, 2021 9:00 AM

To: Nann, Nrinder <Nrinder.Nann@hamilton.ca>; Wilson, Maureen <Maureen.Wilson@hamilton.ca>; Whitehead, Terry <Terry.Whitehead@hamilton.ca>; Collins, Chad <Chad.Collins@hamilton.ca>; Office of the Mayor <mayor@hamilton.ca>; Farr, Jason <Jason.Farr@hamilton.ca>; Merulla, Sam <Sam.Merulla@hamilton.ca>; Jackson, Tom <Tom.Jackson@hamilton.ca>; Pauls, Esther <Esther.Pauls@hamilton.ca>; johnnpaul.danko@hamilton.ca; Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>; Pearson, Maria <Maria.Pearson@hamilton.ca>; Johnson, Brenda <Brenda.Johnson@hamilton.ca>; Ferguson, Lloyd <Lloyd.Ferguson@hamilton.ca>; VanderBeek, Arlene <Arlene.VanderBeek@hamilton.ca>; Partridge, Judi <Judi.Partridge@hamilton.ca>

Cc: info@defundhps.com; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: 100+ Academics & Researchers in Support of Defunding HPS

Good morning:

I hope this email finds you well! My name is Maddie Brockbank and I am a resident of Ward 11 and a PhD student at McMaster University. I am emailing you to voice my dissent against the proposed 2.98% increase to the Hamilton Police Services budget and to urge you to vote against it today. Instead, this surplus and the proposed increase should be returned to the City and reallocated to housing and community-led, harm reduction, trauma-informed supports for those experiencing housing, mental health, and addiction crises.

Furthermore, I am sharing an [open letter](#) that has been signed by over 120 academics and researchers in the Greater Hamilton Area supporting these calls to divest from policing and invest in our communities. See the link above or the PDF version attached.

As public representatives, you represent me. Continued investment in policing fails to represent a significant community of constituents expressing real concerns. I, and many others, are not comfortable continuing to fund police at the expense of essential services, like housing and community health centres. As a social worker, I have seen how underfunded many social services are and how this adversely impacts service users. Investing in these services and our communities is a much better use of these funds and sets out to address the root causes of many of these social issues we're discussing, including many criminalized acts that are often symptomatic of unmet needs (e.g. poverty). What we really need are robust services that are equipped to respond, such as mental health outreach workers, community and housing centres, and accessible education and prevention programs.

We need to reallocate the budget to existing community-led organizations that are offering services to vulnerable persons and create alternative services, such as crisis intervention, mental health services, and housing supports, that are non-carceral and not tied to policing. If you are unable to offer immediate, meaningful action in response to these demands, then I ask that you resign and make way for leadership that is able to do so.

Best,

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Maddie Brockbank [she/her]
BSW, MSW, PhD (student)