

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Emergency & Community Services Committee

From: Whitney Bolam  
Sent: June 23, 2020 11:44 AM  
To: Office of the Mayor <mayor@hamilton.ca>  
Subject: Police Harassment in Hamilton

Dear Mayor Eisenberger,

My name is Whitney Bolam and I am a resident of London Ontario. I would like to bring your attention to the following incident that happened in your city. Please read the following Facebook post from Les Carr, dated June 22, 2020:

"Ok so I can't believe this happened. Taylor's boyfriend, Myles Washington-Purser, was handing out freezies (yes freezies) outside the shelter he's been working at with 2 white co-workers. As they were doing this 3 Hamilton Police officers approached the group and asked what are "you" doing. The 2 girls started to explain and police officers said not you but focused on Myles. They asked if he worked at the shelter, how long had he worked there, where did he get the freezies, did he have a receipt. The 2 coworkers tried to keep helping but were ignored.

Myles has been working at the shelter at his own risk during the whole outbreak. They should be applauding him not harassing him.

Honestly as a white male. I just wanted to throw up. How stupid can our police be to even act like this with everything going on.

I wished I could have been there to simply tell them off. I would have happily gone to jail to make the point.

Black live do matter.

Anyone that reads this thru please share."

While I do not know Myles personally, he and his family are members of The Salvation Army in Hamilton ON, and our families have many friends in common, as my family and I are also members of The Salvation Army here in London ON.

To say I am concerned about this situation is a gross understatement. As a white woman with two teenage boys, I don't have to worry that a situation like this (or worse) will happen to my sons because of the colour of their skin. But Myles' mother DOES have to worry and that is not okay with me. One thing that encourages me as I write this email to you, is that I am able to do so with Myles having only been targeted and harassed by the police. We have become far too familiar that situations like this can escalate and get out of control very quickly, and I am thankful that nothing more happened to Myles. But that is not enough. There is NO reason that Myles should have needed to endure this harassment and I feel it is paramount to speak up when racism is at this entry level of targeting and harassment, because we must do everything we can to stop racism at every level, before another Black, Indigenous or Person of Colour is assaulted or loses their life simply because of the colour of their skin.

Though I am not a resident of your city, I put these questions before you; What will you do to investigate this act of racism against Myles Washington-Purser?

What will you say to Myles Washington-Purser and his family? to the young ladies he was working with when this incident of racism happened? to the shelter where he has been working during the pandemic?

What are you and your City Council doing to ensure this, and other escalated situations, will stop happening to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour in Hamilton ON?

I have shared this story, along with your email address, on my personal Facebook page, and it is my hope that your inbox will be flooded with emails from other concerned parents and citizens who will no longer stand by while our BIPOC brothers and sisters are targeted, harassed and worse because of the racism within the police departments in our cities across our country.

Thank you for your time. I pray that you and all of the leaders within Canada will do everything you can to end racism, especially within our police departments.

Sincerely,  
Whitney Bolam