



CITY OF ALBANY
COMMON COUNCIL
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Chief Michael Lefancheck
NYS Association of Chiefs of Police, Inc.
2697 Hamburg Street
Schenectady, New York 12303

May 7, 2018

Dear Chief Lefancheck:

We, the undersigned members of the City of Albany, New York's Common Council, would like to express our deep concern about the keynote speaker, former Milwaukee County, Wisconsin Sheriff David Clarke at your May 9th 2018 Law Enforcement Exposition of the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police to be held at the Albany Capital Center.

Mr. Clarke has a history of espousing racist rhetoric, such as signaling out the Black Lives Matter movement as a political "extremism" group, yet none of the 85 violent extremist attacks following 9/11 were by Black Lives Matter. In fact, of the 85 attacks, the U.S. General Accounting office notes that 62 of them were carried out by far right extremists. Furthermore, during Mr. Clarke's tenure as Sheriff of Milwaukee County, his department was "fraught with controversy" (*Albany Times Union*, May 7, 2018), including shackling pregnant women while giving birth and turning off water to a bipolar inmate who eventually died of dehydration. These actions and the divisive rhetoric of Mr. Clarke make him unacceptable as a role model for law enforcement.

The Albany Police Department has made great strides in community policing over the last ten years. The Department has built bridges to Albany's communities of color and formally underserved neighborhoods. The Department has been recognized as one of the top police departments in the country due to its emphasis on community policing, and establishing harm reduction intervention programs to help people, not incarcerate them (LEAD – Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion). To bring a speaker to our city whose philosophy of policing (eliminating GED programs for inmates; advocating harsher penalties for those afflicted with drug

dependency) is completely antithetical to our own police department's philosophy of lessening hostility between police and community, is disturbing.

As further proof to the inappropriateness of Mr. Clarke appearing before the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police, is his stated view that habeas corpus be suspended for "hundreds of thousands" or "maybe a million" people who have not been arrested just because, in Mr. Clarke's opinion, they may be "supporting ISIS." Mr. Clarke's proposal to suspend a constitutional protection, based solely on conjecture calls into question his ability to fairly treat individuals who encounter the criminal justice system.

In closing, we would like to reiterate that we do not support the racially charged actions and rhetoric perpetuated by Mr. Clarke. Furthermore, we are disheartened and deeply concerned that this figure with a troubled history of mistreating inmates and other human beings has been asked by your association to address police chiefs and other law enforcements officers in New York State. This simply sends the wrong message to residents in our City and State.

Sincerely,

CITY OF ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL

Gerald Campbell, *Clerk of the Common Council & City Clerk*

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Council President Pro Tempore, Ward 6, Richard Conti

Council Majority Leader, Ward 4, Kelly Kimbrough

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Council Member, Ward 14, Hon. Joseph Igoe

Council Member, Ward 15, Hon. Tom Hoey