



## Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Richard R. Lewis, Chairperson  
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

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December 24, 2019

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Mayor, City of New York - Bill de Blasio  
City Hall, New York, NY 10007

Hon. Andy Byford  
President MTA New York City Transit  
2 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

Hon. Cyrus R. Vance, Jr.  
New York County District Attorney  
One Hogan Place  
New York, NY 10013

**RESOLUTION: OPPOSING GOVERNOR CUOMO'S PLAN TO HIRE 500 NEW MTA POLICE OFFICERS & RECOMMENDATION TO FUND COMMUNITY PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES**

Dear Governor Cuomo, Mayor De Blasio, President Byford & D. A. Vance:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, with a vote of 38 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 abstentions, Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed a resolution calling on Governor Cuomo to halt plans to hire 500 new MTA police, redirect and invest these public funds back into the community and calling on District Attorney Cy Vance to redirect his proposed \$40 million to training programs for police officers.

**Whereas:** In June 2019, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that 500 uniformed officers will be assigned to subway stations and bus stops to combat fare evasion, homelessness, and other issues; the Citizens Budget Commission estimates the price tag of this expanded police force patrolling the MTA will cost roughly \$663 million over the next decade; with an additional investing from Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance in the amount of \$40 million toward this proposal;

**Whereas:** NYPD data indicates that crime in the NYC transit system is down 1.4 percent through September compared to previous years. Although there has been an uptick in robberies when comparing those same figures, overall crime rates have remained fairly consistent since 2015;

**Whereas:** NYPD Chief of Transit Edward Delatorre on November 12, 2019, told MTA board members that overall crime in the subway is down this year, with "declines in nearly all categories of crime" compared to this time last year;

**Whereas:** The 33rd precinct has seen a 50% reduction in transit crime YTD and transit crime in the 34th was unchanged;

**Whereas:** According to Preliminary September 2019 Monthly Report: "New York City Transit, September 2019 farebox revenue of \$392.2 million was \$12.4 million (3.3 percent) above forecast;

**Whereas:** NYPD subway fare evasion reports from 2019 (second quarter) show Transit District 3 (Uptown Manhattan and The Bronx) make up 1,272 of 15,820 (8%) of transit summonses;

**Whereas:** NYPD subway fare evasion reports from 2019 (second quarter) show that two of the stations with the greatest number of arrests are located in CB12 (181<sup>st</sup> and Dyckman stations);

**Whereas:** Recent incidents over transit policing has generated immense community outrage, including incidents involving two churro sellers handcuffed by NYPD officers on Brooklyn subway platforms, officers pointing their guns inside a crowded subway car, punching teenagers in the face, and holding up an L train to remove a man seen dozing off on a bench;

**Whereas:** On Tuesday, November 12, 2019, four officers tackled and handcuffed a young Black subway candy vendor, with a video showing four officers piling on top of the man at the 125<sup>th</sup> Street station on Lexington Avenue subway station;

**Whereas:** According to the NYC Community Health Profiles 2015 report on CB12, 27% of residents of Washington Heights and Inwood live below the Federal Poverty Level; The incarceration rate in Washington Heights and Inwood is higher than the citywide rate (117/100,000 adults aged 16 and older compared to 93/100,000);

**Whereas:** Rates of homelessness among people exiting correctional institutions range from 10-25% according to studies; and, formerly incarcerated people are almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public;

**Whereas:** The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty research shows that criminalization does not address the real causes of homelessness; criminalization worsens homelessness; criminalization is expensive and wasteful, and that Federal studies show that chronic homelessness, due in part to its criminalization, costs the public between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per person every year; A growing number of courts have struck down laws punishing sleeping and camping in public and to the practice of homeless sweeps, under the 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> amendments; and, "Housing First" programs, which provide not just shelter, but housing and then services like health care, have seen the greatest success in permanently ending homelessness;

**Whereas:** This proposal is part of a punitive approach to fare enforcement and homelessness that criminalizes low-income New Yorkers – disproportionately New Yorkers of color. Despite an acknowledgment of fare burden for 800,000 New Yorkers who live below the federal poverty line by the MTA, the reduced fare program was rolled out to only 130,000 people and did not include pay per ride. The plan would exacerbate the criminalization of poor New Yorkers and communities of color who depend on transit every day;

Governor Cuomo, Mayor De Blasio, President Byford & D. A. Vance  
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**Whereas:** 24 City Council Members called on the MTA to address 'Over-Policing,' End Fare Evasion Crackdown, one of whom stated: "Civilians' lives are in unnecessary danger and the racially-charged tensions of youth and police officers continue to grow, believing these changes will result in fewer arrests, as over-policing Black and Brown neighborhoods is simply not the answer." Therefore, be it,

**Resolved:** Community Board 12, Manhattan calls on Governor Cuomo to halt plans to hire 500 new MTA police, redirect and invest these public funds back into the community by improving the quality and accessibility of our public transit, and ensure that low-income New Yorkers have access to reduced fare MetroCards; and be it further,

**Resolved:** Community Board 12, Manhattan calls on District Attorney Cy Vance to redirect his proposed \$40 million to training programs for police officers, including de-escalation, implicit bias, mental health, substance use, and homelessness, as well as needed civil reentry programs that work with community groups to provide rehabilitation and other supports to citizens returning from incarceration.

Sincerely,



Richard R. Lewis  
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Patrick J. Foye, MTA Chairman and CEO  
Hon. Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller  
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman  
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator  
Hon. Dermot f. Shea, NYPD Commissioner  
Captain Charlie A. Bello, 33<sup>rd</sup> Precinct  
Deputy Inspector Peter Andrea, 34<sup>th</sup> Precinct

Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator  
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member  
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member  
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member  
Chief of Transit Edward Delatorre  
Captain Mary J. King, TD 3  
Sgt. Brian Shevitz, TD3 NCO  
Joselinne Minaya, Director MDAWH Office