



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**LOWELL D. KERN**  
Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**  
District Manager

August 6, 2021

**Re: Social and Racial Justice Task Force Open Letter to Community District 4 and its Stakeholders**

Dear Community District 4 Residents,

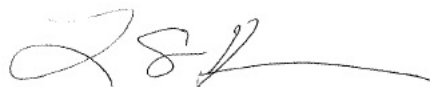
Last year in June 2020, we convened Community Board 4's Social Justice Working Group (now renamed as *Social and Racial Justice Taskforce*) following George Floyd's murder and the protests after the tragic deaths of too many people of color at the hands of the police in the US. We say their names: Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Dion Johnson, and too many others to name, who did not receive justice and their lives were senselessly cut short at the hands of law enforcement and the very system that was meant to protect them, all because of the color of their skin and deep-rooted systemic racism. Our initial response was to come together as a community to voice our discontent and dismay over what has been happening over many years and proactively engage with the city leaders, elected officials and the law enforcement agencies while also trying to understand the disconnect between the police and communities; and do what we can, to help build trust and bridge the divide within our District and beyond. Over the last one year, we have formulated and passed resolutions, recommendations and written pledges and letters to engage the policy-makers and civic leaders. We have connected with the NYPD, CCRB, civic groups, city agencies, public and private institutions, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to engage them towards creating opportunities for the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and Other People of Color) communities and youth while encouraging them to embrace antiracist policies and programs.

We reaffirm that commitment and continue to engage the community in an ongoing dialogue about racism and discrimination. It is our collective responsibility to take a proactive role in examining what we can do better for achieving demonstrable progress towards social and racial equity and equality in our District and beyond. We, the Task Force and Community Board 4, reiterate that commitment and stand in solidarity against

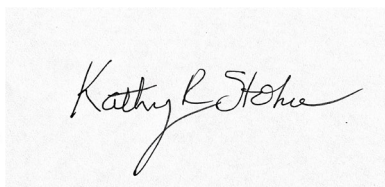
implicit systemic bias, social and racial disparities; inequities in access to equitable housing, health and human services; discrimination based on race, class, creed, gender identity, sexual orientation and color of people's skin; and racialized policies and practices of a City that otherwise prides itself as a melting pot. Moving forward, we hope to continue the conversation, and be that effective change we all want to see.

Although there is still more to be accomplished, with your participation, advocacy and collective efforts by the communities from across the city, NYC Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan has materialized; the City Council has recently voted To End Qualified Immunity and Seven Other Measures to Reform NYPD in addition to other Police Reform Bills; CCRB has released Database of NYPD Officers' CCRB Histories and is now empowered to begin Investigating Phase 2 Allegations of Sexual Misconduct. We will continue to monitor implementation of these and other legislative changes. Moving forward, we look forward to working with you and your continued engagement and insights.<sup>1</sup>

In Solidarity,



Lowell Kern  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4



Katy Stokes  
Co-Chair  
Social and Racial Justice  
Task Force



Viren Brahmhatt  
Co-Chair  
Social and Racial  
Task Force

CC: Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor, New York State Governor  
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor, New York City  
Hon. Corey Johnson, New York City Council Speaker  
Dermot F. Shea, Commissioner, NYPD  
Hon. Cyrus Vance, New York City District Attorney  
Hon. Scott Stringer, New York City Comptroller  
Hon. Jumaane Williams, New York City Public Advocate  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, New York State Senator  
Hon. Robert Jackson, New York State Senator  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, New York State Assemblymember  
Hon. Richard Gottfried, New York State Assemblymember  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President

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<sup>1</sup> MCB4, at its July 28<sup>th</sup> Full Board meeting by a vote of 32 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, voted to approve this letter