



June 19, 2020

Honorable Jay Inslee
Governor, State of Washington
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Inslee

We, the Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma, demand minimal and peaceful police presence at all Washington protests.

Here in Tacoma, we have set an example for the whole State by maintaining peaceful and powerful demonstrations. Even in a city rocked by the tragic homicide of Manuel Ellis, our demonstrations have remained nonviolent. In cities across the nation, including in Washington, marches have turned painfully violent after clashes between the police and protestors. In Tacoma, we are conflict-free.

This cooperative approach is mirrored by our local authorities. Tacoma Police have not attended protests in riot gear, nor have they employed tear gas, rubber bullets, or any other aggressive measures to control us. We are united as a compassionate Tacoma. Our police showcase strength by never competing with us or interfering. Our Mayor actively supports and defends our actions, fighting with us against injustice. Our local leaders stand behind us. This is a model everyone should follow.

All protests, and especially those that address police brutality, require the respect of the police. Officers are meant to protect and serve the protester's right to peacefully assemble. But in many cases, the police's confrontational presence, full riot gear, and aggressive behavior have only exacerbated situations rather than de-escalating them. We refuse to let this continue in our State.

We, the Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma, [along with over 35,000 petitioners](#), demand safe protests across our State. This requires minimal police presence that's completely free of any dangerous tactics. As demonstrations continue to grow across our State, this issue becomes more and more urgent.

We appreciate your request of the Washington State Patrol Chief to examine the WSP's aggressive behavior as well as your push for a full investigation of Manuel Ellis's death. But we need more action in order to keep us safe. As our Mayor so powerfully stated, "peaceful demonstrations are not only understandable in times like these, they are necessary". Washingtonians have the power to create long-lasting change on a national level, but that is only possible if we feel safe enough to share our

voices. Please require any police forces attending Washington protests to be minimal and peaceful. By ensuring a peaceful police force, you will influence systemic change as we lead the nation.

If there is anything we can do to aid you in this process, please let us know immediately.

Grateful for your support,


Rosemary Sissel, Chair


Yasmin Aref, Vice Chair

Signing on behalf of the Mayor's Youth Commission of Tacoma

CC: The Honorable Laurie Jenkins, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Jeannie Darnielle, 27th LD State Senator
The Honorable Jake Fey, 27th LD State Representative
The Honorable Steve O'Ban, 28th LD State Senator
The Honorable Christine Kilduff, 28th LD State Representative
The Honorable Mari Leavitt, 28th LD State Representative
The Honorable Steve Conway, 29th LD State Senator
The Honorable Steve Kirby, 29th State Representative
The Honorable Melanie Morgan, 29th LD State Representative