



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Linda:

Thank you for writing. Our Nation has made enormous progress in race relations over the past few decades. I've witnessed it in my own life. However, distrust still exists between too many police departments and communities of color. When any part of our American family doesn't feel fairly treated, that's a problem for all of us—it means we are not as strong a country as we can be.

Without commenting on incidents where there may still be an investigation, I recognize the fears and frustrations I hear about are deeply felt; they are rooted in realities that have existed for a long time. That's why we need to uphold a system committed to the principle of equal justice for all.

Law enforcement officials have incredibly difficult jobs and put their lives at risk to protect us. And they are most effective when people have confidence in the system. That is why my Administration is working to enhance community policing, and also to strengthen trust and accountability between law enforcement officers and the communities they serve. We will take concrete steps to implement the commonsense, pragmatic recommendations my Task Force on 21st Century Policing put forward last year—based on input from criminal justice experts, community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and civil liberties advocates. We are advancing the use of body-worn cameras and promoting proven community-policing initiatives, and we are reforming how the Federal Government equips state and local law enforcement, particularly with military-style equipment.

I am deeply committed to the promise of what our Nation can be, and my Administration will keep pushing for progress through ongoing initiatives, continued engagement with communities, and other targeted efforts. To learn more, visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/Community-Policing.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts. We may not solve every problem or tear down every barrier of mistrust overnight, but by working together and addressing our challenges in the open space of democracy, we can make things better.

Sincerely,

Barack Obama

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