

March 27, 2022

To the Ottawa Police Services Board:

We are two residents who are very concerned about the current state and planned direction of policing in Ottawa. We had signed up to speak at the OPS Board meeting on February 28, but because of childcare obligations and safety concerns we are not able to attend this meeting in person, so we are submitting our comments in writing.

We are not experts in policing or community health, but we have listened to those who are, and we want to add our voices to the continued calls for freezing and reducing police funding, especially in light of the ongoing abysmal response of the OPS to the convoy protests. This very weekend, the Twitter account @OttawaPolice tweeted the following statement:

“We are ensuring the safe movement of a convoy that originated in Quebec and are travelling through Ottawa en route to Vankleek Hill. Counter-protests are hindering the safe flow of traffic and putting public safety at risk.”

This behaviour by the police is hypocritical and does not serve the public interest. This is not behaviour that keeps people safe, and experts have told you this repeatedly. It is time you listened to them.

We are very concerned about recent statements made about the need for more police to respond to this crisis, and we are concerned that the failure of policing in the convoy crisis will be used as leverage to increase the police budget in the future. We want to remind the board that any temporary outside assistance should NOT translate to more permanent OPS funding. We want to be very clear: we do not support any increase to the OPS budget.

Sincerely,

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