



Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus

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June 6, 2019

Commissioner Richard Ross, Jr.
Philadelphia Police Department
One Franklin Square
Room 314
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Commissioner Ross,

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, I write to express deep concern over reports that over 3,000 racially biased posts and comments on Facebook were written by current duty officers and retired officers of the Philadelphia Police Department, including a very high number of posts that glorify violence and vigilantism. According to the social justice research organization, Plain View Project, their analyses revealed more than 300 active-duty officers posted and exchanged hate-filled comments consisting of ethnic slurs and bias.

This serious matter deserves your utmost attention. We welcome the steps that you have taken to initiate an investigation into the incident and urge you to ensure that the investigation is thorough, impartial and transparent, and that the results are made public when it is concluded.

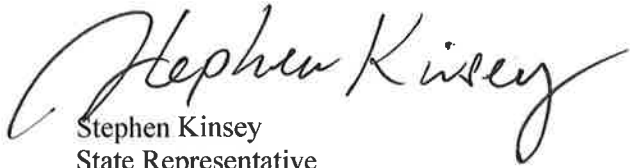
In particular, the investigation should examine compliance with your department's social media policy, which prohibits the use of ethnic slurs, profanity and personal insults. We recognize the responsibility of the police to uphold law and order, and in no way condone violence or any other mistreatment by individuals against police. Those who commit crimes against police officers or others should be prosecuted appropriately. Unlawful actions by some individuals, however, cannot justify the racist and biased social media posts by the city's police officers.

In addition, we urge you to hold accountable, through disciplinary measures, including annual psychological evaluations, race relations training, criminal prosecution and/or dismissal, any officers and their commanders found responsible for authoring the troubling racially biased social media posts. Moreover, pending the results of your investigation, any police officer suspected of involvement in policy violation should be immediately suspended from active duty. As both you and your deputies have acknowledged, it is important that a

clear message be sent to the general public that the Philadelphia Police Department will not tolerate racial discrimination in any form.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns, and we look forward to receiving a response at your earliest convenience.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen Kinsey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Stephen Kinsey
State Representative
201st Legislative District
Chairman, Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus

cc: Representative Frank Dermody, Democratic Leader
Representative, Jason Dawkins, Philadelphia Delegation Chair