



U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

MAR 31 2011

The Honorable Michael McGinn
Mayor
City of Seattle
600 4th Avenue, 7th Floor
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Re: Seattle Police Department

Dear Mayor McGinn:

This is to inform you that the United States Department of Justice is commencing an investigation concerning allegations of the use of excessive force and discriminatory policing by members of the Seattle Police Department ("SPD"), pursuant to the pattern or practice provision of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, 42 U.S.C. § 14141, as well as the anti-discrimination provisions of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. § 3789d, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d.

In conducting the investigation, we will seek to determine whether there are systemic violations of the Constitution or laws of the United States by sworn law enforcement officers of the SPD. We have not reached any conclusions about the subject matter of the investigation. We believe that you and other Seattle city officials want to operate the SPD consistent with the requirements of the Constitution and federal law. During the course of our investigation, we will consider all relevant information, particularly the efforts that Seattle has undertaken to ensure compliance with federal law. We will also offer to provide recommendations on ways to improve police practices, when appropriate. Provided that the SPD cooperates fully with our investigation, if we conclude that there are not systemic violations of constitutional or other federal rights, we will notify you that we are closing the investigation. If, on the other hand, we conclude there are such violations, we will inform you of the findings and attempt to work with the City of Seattle to remedy any such violations. In addition, we will identify any financial, technical, or other assistance the United States may be able to provide to assist the City in correcting the identified deficiencies.

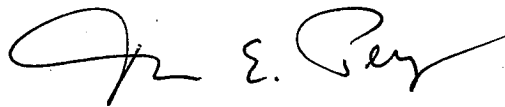
Our enforcement of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has involved a variety of state and local law enforcement agencies, both large and small, in jurisdictions such as New York, Ohio, New Jersey, Georgia, the District of Columbia, and Arizona. In our years of enforcing these statutes, the good faith efforts of state and local

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jurisdictions working with us have enabled us routinely to resolve our investigations without resort to contested litigation. We encourage the City of Seattle and the SPD to cooperate with our investigation and can assure you that we will seek to minimize any potential disruption our efforts may have on the operations of the SPD.

Our Special Litigation Section will be handling the investigation jointly with the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, and will contact your office to discuss the next steps. The Chief of the Special Litigation Section, Jonathan M. Smith, may be reached at (202) 514-5393, and the Deputy Chief of the Special Litigation Section, Tammie M. Gregg, may be reached at (202) 616-2009. Civil Chief for the United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, Kerry Keefe, may be reached at (206) 553-2640, and Assistant United States Attorney J. Michael Diaz may be reached at (206) 553-4358.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Perez
Assistant Attorney General

cc: Chief John Diaz
Seattle Police Department

Peter Holmes
Seattle City Attorney

Jenny Durkan
United States Attorney
United States Attorney's Office
Western District of Washington

Kerry Keefe
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