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Decree**

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Supplement 1. Baltimoreans United in Leadership
Development (BUILD)



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Affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation

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OFFICE OF JAMES K. BREDAR
U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE

January 31, 2017

Honorable James K. Bredar
The Edward A. Garmatz U.S. Courthouse Courtroom:1A
101 W. Lombard St.
Baltimore, MD 212101

RE: JKB-17-0099 - USA v. Police Department of Baltimore City, et al.

Dear Judge Bredar:

We are writing to you on behalf of BUILD (Baltimoreans United In Leadership Development), a broad-based, non-partisan, interfaith, multiracial community power organization rooted in Baltimore's neighborhoods and congregations. BUILD is an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation, a coalition of like-minded organizations in cities across the United States, Germany and the UK. For 40 years, BUILD has worked to improve housing, increase job opportunities for Baltimoreans facing employment barriers, and organized to rebuild schools and neighborhoods. We have organized to address the deep-rooted issues that contribute to increased crime in the most distressed neighborhoods in Baltimore City.

One of the most difficult obstacles we face is convincing persons in the most desperate situations that they have a voice and that change is possible. When the unrest occurred in 2015, BUILD had been building relationships and organizing in Sandtown-Winchester for almost two years. The most difficult part of organizing was gaining the trust of residents who had been promised time and time again that change is possible. We listened to almost 400 residents before and after the unrest and trust was beginning to be established.

As a result of the organizing that occurred in Ohio through a sister organization, BUILD was able to ask the Department of Justice (DOJ) to come to Baltimore and speak with the residents in Sandtown-Winchester. The timing was pivotal. There was a serious decrease in policing and residents felt they were under siege and due to the stressed relationship between Baltimore residents and the Baltimore Police Department (BPD). They felt hopeless. There were murders occurring in Sandtown-Winchester at an alarming rate, and drugs dealers were coming into the neighborhood from all over the city, which had never occurred before the unrest. The DOJ agents were a sounding board for the residents and a glimmer of hope.

Although the DOJ came with the openness and willingness to listen to the residents, it was extremely difficult to convince residents to share their stories when they expected to be set up for another let down. The persons who came forward were some of the bravest individuals BUILD has ever encountered. The participants did not think a consent decree was a panacea, but they were hopeful something would change. Additionally, BUILD has worked hard to develop strong relationships between the BPD and the Baltimore community. Many from the BPD want to have procedures put in place that will lift up constitutional and effective community policing.

BUILD is not an idealistic organization. We understand procedure more than most. In any normal time, a delay in executing the consent decree may be judicious – and even preferable. But this is not a normal time. While we

cannot know with certainty what the new Administration will do regarding the consent decree, there is a substantial chance it may be somehow delayed. If that happens, the oversight and assistance promised by the federal government will disappear. Baltimore will lose its greatest chance at improving community relations with law enforcement, and the potential for increased community distrust of law enforcement will only grow.

As a federal judge, we are sure you can personally attest to the negative consequences that arise when a community no longer trusts law enforcement. Disrespect for law enforcement increases, causing a dangerous situation for both police officers and citizens. Disregard for the law becomes more common, causing increases in crime and impacting the city's livability. Juries no longer trust the sworn testimony of law enforcement officers, leading to wrongful acquittals and jury nullification.

Moreover, we cannot let those most impacted become let down once again. We cannot afford a continuance or anything else that will continue to attribute to the persons in the most distressed neighborhoods feeling once again that nothing will change. To heal Baltimore, the city and DOJ have agreed on the reforms that are needed. Now they have to live by and enforce that agreement.

We at BUILD are asking that in these most unpredictable times that you do everything in your power to expedite the process. We also request you meet with BUILD so you can hear firsthand from the community the impact if this agreement is delayed and not fully implemented. Please ask your staff to contact [REDACTED], BUILD Organizer, at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED], to schedule this important meeting.

Sincerely,



The Rev Andrew Foster Connors
BUILD Clergy Co-Chair

Supplement 2. Thomas Starr

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my support for the Baltimore Consent Decree, and do everything in my power to ensure that the decree be completed/implemented with full transparency, and as a Top priority for the Department of Justice, and the city of Baltimore. Born and raised in Baltimore city, I care deeply about this city. I am invested in Baltimore emotionally, financially, professionally, and culturally, and I wish only for its continued growth, improvement, and success. I was very disturbed to hear and learn of the blatant, systematic injustices taking place within the Baltimore Police Department. It is my hope and expectation that this decree be implemented successfully, and transparently, with proper oversight from monitors, and representation from those in the affected communities on the review board. I also want to express my extreme concern at Jeff Sessions' statements on pulling back consent decree processes in general, and especially at his dropping of civil rights abuse cases against police departments. Thank you for reading this letter, and I look forward to seeing the progress of the Baltimore City Police Dept. in the coming years.

Best,

Thomas Starr