

5/11/2023

Assemblymember Anthony Rendon
Assembly Speaker District 62
1021 O Street, Suite 8220

RE: Assembly Bill 1291 (McCarty) - SUPPORT

Dear Speaker Holden,

The Policing Project strongly supports AB 1291 (McCarty), which would require cities and counties to post financial details about police misconduct settlements and judgments that amount to \$50,000 and above on their websites, including amounts paid to plaintiffs. Additionally, municipalities are required to report the amount allocated from their budget that is spent towards law enforcement settlements and judgments.

The [Policing Project](#) is a national organization that believes that the best way to ensure transparent, effective, and equitable policing is for the public to be democratically involved in setting expectations for police practices before police act, instead of after something has gone wrong. My support is in part based on the Policing Project's research and model state statutes on [police use of force](#) and on [data collection and transparency](#). The Policing Project vetted these statutes with an advisory committee, consisting of law enforcement officials, academics, police reform experts, and affected community members.

Over the last decade, the 25 largest law enforcement agencies in the country have made more than 40,000 payouts on behalf of police who have been accused of misconduct, costing taxpayers upwards of \$3.2 billion. New York City alone spends on average more than \$170 million annually on police misconduct settlements and judgments. In 2020-21, LA County paid \$79 million in settlements and judgments against the Sheriff's department and another \$59 million in litigation fees. These settlements and judgements are frequently financed through general obligation bonds, which carry fees and high interest rates. Indeed, LA taxpayers will spend \$18 million to bond providers alone to repay the \$71.4 million in bonds taken out to finance settlements and judgements in 2010 alone.

Citizens have the right to know how their city and county are spending hard-earned tax dollars, especially when there are such large amounts of money at stake. By requiring municipalities to publicly post financial details of law enforcement use-of-force settlements, AB 1291 is a step towards transparency and accountability towards government spending and law enforcement practices. This transparency will give legislators a clear picture of the costs of police misconduct, providing some crucial information needed to craft appropriate policing policy.

For these reasons, The Policing Project is pleased to support AB 1291, and respectfully asks for your "aye" vote when it comes before you in the committee.

Sincerely,
The Policing Project