



Contact:

Loren Jones

ljones@impactforequity.org | 312-759-8266

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The Free2Move Coalition will make the following statement at the Budget Hearings for the Office of Public Safety Administration, Department of Police meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall.

The Free2Move Coalition is an alliance of community organizations and advocates determined to create a more racially equitable system of traffic safety. We have grave concerns with the city's proposed 90 million dollar increase to the Chicago Police Department budget. CPD's current use of resources is inefficient, not evidence-based, and has proven to have extremely harmful impacts on the communities it is intended to serve and protect.

A prime example is the Chicago Police Department's use of traffic stops. CPD is tasked with enforcing the traffic code to ensure that our roadways are safe for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Data obtained from CPD shows that the Department uses that power to make an excessive number of traffic stops with the intention of investigating for signs of criminal activity or illegal contraband. CPD has been vocal about using pretextual traffic stops as a primary policing strategy. However, this strategy has proven to be extremely ineffective. In 2022, CPD made over half a million stops yet less than 1% of those stops resulted in the recovery of any kind of illegal contraband and less than 0.6% resulted in the recovery of a firearm. Concerns have been raised that many of the firearms recovered during traffic stops are for minor licensing or carrying violations. The Department has also failed to address growing concerns with roadway safety. Over the past five years, the number of serious injuries and fatalities on our roadways has soared, peaking during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite high numbers of fatalities, traffic stops made for dangerous driving behaviors like speeding, DUI, and reckless driving were the cause of less than 2% of traffic stops from 2019-2021. Traffic stops increased 35% from 2021 to 2022, yet there was only a 4% decrease in traffic-related fatalities.

The City continues to increase funding to CPD for this new kind of "stop and frisk" policing that is not only inefficient but has also deepened the divide between police and communities of color, particularly Black communities. In 2022, there were over six times the number of traffic stops of Black and Latine drivers combined than white drivers. Advocates and community members alike

have been sounding the alarm on racial profiling in stops yet CPD has failed to pivot; rather, the numbers indicate they have doubled down.

We believe that by reducing the Department's use of pretextual traffic stops and investing in alternative safety systems like robust infrastructure and civilian safety enforcement, we can make our roadways safer, save countless taxpayer dollars, and improve 911 response and clearance rates without increases to the already massive CPD budget.

To learn more about the Free2Move Coalition's work to end pretextual traffic stops visit www.free2movechi.org and join us on November 13th at the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee hearing at City Hall where the Coalition will be presenting on the [scope, impact and inequities of traffic stops in Chicago](#), and inequities of traffic stops in Chicago and [what we can do to change it](#).