

November 30, 2022

Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer
United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois
Everett McKinley Dirksen United States Courthouse
219 S. Dearborn St., Courtroom 2541
Chicago, IL 60604

Re: Written Testimony Regarding Chicago Police Consent Decree
State of Illinois v. City of Chicago, 17-cv-06260

Dear Chief Judge Pallmeyer,

My name is Adele Sims. I am a senior who uses a push chair. I have lived in the Uptown neighborhood in Chicago for more than fifteen years. I am a longtime leader at ONE Northside, a grassroots community organization that is one of the members of the Coalition that helps enforce the Chicago Police Department Consent Decree.

I am submitting this written testimony because it is essential that the Court hear from people like me who have had negative experiences with Chicago police.

Several years ago I was getting my hair done at my hairdresser's home when the home was raided by four male police officers. My female hairdresser and I were the only two people in the house, and yet these officers burst in aggressively with guns pointed. While I was sitting under the hair dryer, one officer came up to me and stuck the gun under the dryer and pushed it in my face. This was terrifying.

Up until that experience, I really felt the police were there to protect and serve people. After having that scary experience, my feelings about police officers completely changed. I felt I could not trust them again and I was scared of them in a way I never had felt before. Now when I see police officers, I avoid them. I am still frightened because of the time an officer pointed a gun in my face.

The City must rebuild trust between police officers and residents. The police require the trust of the community in order to keep all of us safe. They need us to call 911 when we see dangerous situations. They need witnesses to come forward. Right now, many people have had bad experiences like I had, and therefore we do not trust police. We do not see ourselves as allies with the police. This should change.

The Chicago police also need to see community members as allies instead of as enemies. This requires a wholesale transformation of the culture in the Chicago

Police Department. The problems with CPD's culture are deep-seated and far-reaching. This culture of "us vs. them" needs to change. Why can't officers see their job as working with the people in our communities instead of against us?

To start that change, the Superintendent and the City need to start holding officers accountable and disciplining them when they mistreat people. Officers are not above the rules.

I've heard people complain that the consent decree is expensive, or that the police don't have the money needed to make changes. But that cost is nothing compared to the number of lives that could be saved if the City took the consent decree seriously. The cost is nothing compared to the costs in emotional harm and trauma that people suffer as a result of police abuses. And the cost is very little compared to the amount the City keeps paying out in settlements when officers commit abuse, over and over, and do not get fired.

Sincerely,
/s/ Adele Sims
Adele Sims