



VIA EMAIL

City Clerk
City of Long Beach
411 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

October 3, 2022

**Re: Public Comment on Agenda Item 46 of October 4, 2022 City Council Meeting
Concerning Adoption of Special Order Regarding Use of Military Equipment**

Dear Members of the City of Long Beach's City Council:

The ACLU of Southern California and Just Futures Law write to oppose the adoption of the Long Beach Police Department Special Order concerning the continued use of military equipment by the Department. We urge this Council to reject this Special Order and demand the Department permanently relinquish all military equipment currently in its possession. Since Long Beach is not currently at war, no country has ever invaded Long Beach, and no site of domestic civil upheaval is currently being scheduled to take place in the Southern California region, we see no reason for the adoption of a policy designed to normalize the continued retention of dangerous, deadly, and expensive military equipment. We ask this Council to instead divert the funds the Department spends on these weapons of war to life-affirming social services, of which many require this Council's urgent attention.

By the Department's own words, the purpose of this Special Order is to bring "legally enforceable safeguards including transparency, oversight, and accountability measures in place to ensure the public's welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties are uplifted before equipment is funded, acquired, or used." But the Long Beach community has made clear time and again that no amount of transparency, oversight, and accountability will normalize and pacify the Department's use of weapons of war over our neighbors and community members. The Department has no viable justification for why it maintains 207 grenade launchers, 67 assault rifles, three armored personnel carriers, an armored Suburban, 750 feet of detonation cord, 50 blasting caps, 6 drones, and one LRAD, and we can see none. And if these weapons of war are not justifiable in the first instance, what use are oversight and accountability over them?

We are particularly troubled that the current inventory of military equipment owned by the Department includes surveillance technologies that are likely to put further stigma and scrutiny on vulnerable and overpoliced segments of our community, including license plate readers and drones, to name two. These tools—like military equipment generally—have never been

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Hector O. Villagra

CHAIR Michele Goodwin **VICE CHAIRS** Rob Hennig and Stacy Horth-Neubert

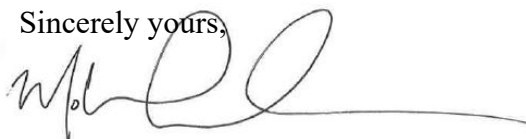
CHAIRS EMERITI Marla Stone Shari Leinwand Stephen Rohde Danny Goldberg Allan K. Jonas* Burt Lancaster* Irving Lichtenstein, MD* Jarl Mohn Laurie Ostrow* Stanley K. Sheinbaum*

*deceased

demonstrated to empirically reduce criminality, deviance, and support public safety over well-studied, well-developed non-law enforcement alternatives for enhancing public safety. In fact, they make matters worse.

Rather than adopting a policy that enables the Department to continue to maintain—and likely expand—its military arsenal at considerable social and economic cost to Long Beach residents, we urge the City Council to divest funds from the Department’s military equipment program and reinvest them in proven strategies that reduce harm in our communities. Whether through funding for public schools, after school programming, public health programming, parks and public spaces, rent control, or affordable housing, the City’s established and well-regarded network of community-based organizations have already developed roadmaps for how to invest in—rather than criminalize—members of the City’s rich community. We believe strongly that ending the military equipment program is a discrete, achievable, and concrete step the City Council can take to demonstrate its commitment to transformational change for the City.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Tajsar', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mohammad Tajsar
ACLU of Southern California

Julie Mao
Just Futures Law

From: CheckLBPD [mailto:Greg@checklbpd.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 1:19 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: Comment on item 46—AB 481

-EXTERNAL-

This proposed policy undermines the goals of AB 481. Please don't rubber stamp this policy.

The local policy that is supposed to result from AB 481 should "safeguard the public's welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties," with military equipment only deployed as a last result. The LBPD policy has no provision that ensures that civil rights & liberties will be respected and it is unclear how they will ensure military equipment is used as a last resort.

The LBPD has used military equipment to suppress & spy on BLM protests. They have deployed tear gas, rubber bullets, & high tech camera trucks as a 1st resort. Nothing in this policy will prevent them from doing so again.

The LBPD is using AB 481 to establish a policy to allow them to use military equipment however they see fit. It will be shameful if you let the LBPD manipulate a process that was supposed to allow community control police use of military equipment to instead allow the police unchecked use of such weapons.

Greg Buhl
CheckLBPD.org
Greg@CheckLBPD.org



VIA EMAIL
City Clerk
411 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

Oct. 4, 2022

RE: **Public Comment of Agenda Item 46 of October 4, 2022 City Council Meeting**
Concerning Adoption of Special Order Regarding Use of Military Equipment

Dear Members of the City of Long Beach City Council:

The California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance write to oppose the adoption of the Long Beach Police Department Special Order concerning the continued use of military equipment by the Department. We urge this Council to reject this Special Order and demand the Department permanently relinquish all military equipment currently in its possession. Since Long Beach is not currently at war, no country has ever invaded Long Beach, and no site of domestic civil upheaval is currently being scheduled to take place in the Southern California region, We see no reason for the adoption of a policy designed to normalize the continued retention of dangerous, deadly, and expensive military equipment. We ask this council to please reconsider and relocate the set funding the Department spends on these weapons of war to life-affirming social services, of which many require this council's urgent attention.

By the Department's own words, the purpose of this Special Order is to bring "legally enforceable safeguards including transparency, oversight, and accountability measures in place to ensure the public's welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties are uplifted before equipment is funded, acquired, or used." But the Long Beach community has made clear time and again that no amount of transparency, oversight, and accountability will normalize and pacify the Department's use of weapons of war over our neighbors and community members. The Department has no viable justification for why it maintains 207 grenade launchers, 67 assault rifles, three armored personnel carriers, an armored Suburban, 750 feet of detonation cord, 50 blasting caps, 6 drones, and one LRAD, and we can see none. And if these weapons of war are not justifiable in the first instance, what use are oversight and accountability over them?

We are particularly troubled that the current inventory of military equipment owned by the Department includes surveillance technologies that are likely to put further stigma and scrutiny on vulnerable and overpoliced segments of our community, including license plate readers and drones, to name two. These tools—like military equipment generally—have never been demonstrated to empirically reduce criminality, deviance, and support public safety over well-studied, well-developed non-law enforcement alternatives for enhancing public safety. In fact, they make matters worse.

Rather than adopting a policy that enables the Department to continue to maintain—and likely expand—its military arsenal at considerable social and economic cost to Long Beach residents, we urge the City Council to divest funds from the Department’s military equipment program and reinvest them in proven strategies that reduce harm in our communities. Whether through funding for public schools, after school programming, public health programming, parks and public spaces, rent control, or affordable housing, the City’s established and well-regarded network of community-based organizations have already developed roadmaps for how to invest in—rather than criminalize—members of the City’s rich community. We believe strongly that ending the military equipment program is a discrete, achievable, and concrete step the City Council can take to demonstrate its commitment to transformational change for the City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Humberto Hernandez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "H" and "M".

**Humberto Hernandez | Deportation Defense Coordinator
California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance
M: 9096850934
A: 634 S. Spring St. Suite 1100, Los Angeles, CA 90014
E: Bhernandez@ciyja.org**

From: Julie Dean [mailto:julz.travels@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 4:17 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: 10/4/22 Council Meeting - Agenda Item #46

-EXTERNAL-

Attn: Long Beach City Clerk
Re: 10/4/22 Council Meeting, Agenda Item #46

I would like to voice that I am completely against the use of military weapons by LBPD. The police are not military, they should not be harming citizens, and they should lean towards de-escalation... always.

And there should absolutely NOT be a city ordinance for such a violent solution. We are not living in a military state. Please stop this.

Thank you, Julie Dean

Julie Dean
julz.travels@yahoo.com

From: Michelle Shiba Pujol [mailto:pujol.michelle@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 5:00 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: Agenda Item 46 Public Comment

-EXTERNAL-

Good evening:

I am writing to express my opposition to increasing the militarization of the Long Beach Police Department. Arming LBPD for war is not necessary and endangers everyone's safety and civil rights. No "incidents" can justify unleashing an army on our community. Much of this equipment is designed to overpower large masses of people, while other items, like the "Freedom on the Move" thermal camera, is used to spy on people. In fact, LBPD reportedly did use it to monitor the uprisings here in Long Beach following George Floyd's murder in 2020. These tools threaten people's rights to assemble and protest; just knowing that LBPD has them may make people afraid to speak up.

LBPD's policy says that police will keep on using all the weapons of war they want, and if we have a problem with it, we can drop a note in the suggestion box. AB 481 is an invitation to cities to intervene in police militarization and to ban the use of military-grade equipment, which it recognizes is dangerous and harmful, especially to communities of color. At a minimum, AB 481 requires transparency and accountability. LBPD has not met even this bare minimum requirement: a single community engagement meeting and making an email address for complaints cannot possibly qualify as the kind of transparency and accountability the law demands.

LBPD already failed in transparency. It only recently added the "Freedom on the Move" surveillance camera to the inventory, delaying this very vote. But LBPD reportedly had it and used it in 2020. Why wasn't it on the list? Even if it was an error, why would we trust LBPD with using devastating weapons if they can't even keep their list of what they have straight.

Under AB 481, LBPD now needs Council's permission in order to buy more military equipment. But this requirement is meaningless if Council just rubber stamps all LBPD requests like this special order. LBPD's policy says it intends the special order to be legally enforceable, but the order promises nothing. It places no real protections or limits on the use of military equipment. In fact, the special order even creates a loophole that allows LBPD to buy up to 15% of its stock *without* Council approval if it runs low. Apparently, LBPD anticipates running out of tear gas and high caliber bullets.

You may read LBPD's special order, which it peppers with euphemisms like "distraction devices," and see a list of stuff. But these are not just things; this is a catalog of extreme violence. LBPD already kills and hurts people with their standard guns and cars. They don't need bullets that can obliterate a person's body or tanks to mow people down. They already spy on us; Council should not give them a thermal camera to find us just from the heat of our

bodies. Rather than signing off on these tools of death and destruction, Council should work to take them away.

LBPD asks Council to approve its use of weapons of war. But who is LBPD at war against? In passing AB 481, the California legislature explicitly acknowledged that this equipment is disproportionately used against poor people and Brown and Black people. LBPD is the fifth most violent police force in the country. Who bears the brunt of that violence? Black and Brown and poor people. Now is the moment to reduce LBPD's capacity for violence – and its capacity to harm our communities.

Sincerely,
Michelle Pujol

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Michelle Pujol

This e-mail, including any attachments, is intended only for use by the addressee(s) and may contain legally privileged and/or confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, please do not disclose, distribute or copy this communication. Please notify the sender that you have received this e-mail in error and delete the original and any copy of the e-mail and any attachments. Thank you.

From: Jennifer Tu [mailto:JTU@afsc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 12:47 PM
To: CityClerk <CityClerk@longbeach.gov>
Subject: Comment on City Council agenda item 46 (22-1166) Recommendation to adopt LBPB Special Order

-EXTERNAL-

Councilmembers, thank you for taking the time to thoroughly consider and engage with the proposal. AFSC has been providing detailed AB 481 policy analysis to elected officials and community organizations across California. We would be happy to meet with any Long Beach Councilmembers who would like a more detailed analysis.

There are 3 major issues with the proposal:

- (1) Does not comply with [AB 48 \(CA Penal Code Section 13652\)](#) on weapon use for crowd control (chemical + kinetic impact weapons)
- (2) Does not identify independent oversight person/body, as required by [AB 481](#)
- (3) Does not comply with AB 481's requirement to include authorized **uses** for each equipment type, including for the surveillance equipment newly added to the proposal. Identifying an internal Department authorization point does not define what **uses** the equipment is authorized for.

AB 481 requires City Councils to only approve policies that will safeguard the public's welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties. We encourage you to call for the changes needed for this policy to do so.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Tu

[Read our report: Equipped for War](#)
Ristad Fellow, [California Healing Justice Program](#)
American Friends Service Committee