



State of North Carolina
General Court of Justice
Defender District 15B

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To Whom it May Concern,

Over the past several months, the Durham Human Relations Commission has held a series of special hearings for the purpose of investigating allegations of racial profiling and misconduct by the Durham Police Department. Over a series of nine two-hour hearings, the Commission has heard empirical evidence and personal stories about the pronounced racial disparities that exist with respect to traffic and drug enforcement in the city of Durham. Much of this evidence is summarized in detail in a series of letters submitted to the Commission by the FADE coalition ("Fostering Alternative Drug Enforcement").

It is our opinion that the enforcement disparities documented by the FADE coalition warrant action by City Council. Throughout the hearings, the FADE coalition and their partners, the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and the NAACP, have advanced a series of five specific policy recommendations which, if properly implemented, would provide safeguards against racial profiling and selective drug enforcement practices. We believe these recommendations are well-considered and that they would, if adopted, help ameliorate many of the problems that prompted these hearings. Therefore we support the FADE coalition and their community partners in requesting the following 5 policy changes.

- (1) implement a mandatory written consent-to-search policy for all vehicle searches;
- (2) make marijuana enforcement the department's lowest law enforcement priority;
- (3) implement a policy requiring mandatory periodic review of officer stop data;
- (4) reform and strengthen the Durham Civilian Police Review Board; and
- (5) mandate that the department participate in formal racial equity training.

Respectfully,

James E. Williams, Jr.
James E. Williams, Jr., Chair
North Carolina Public Defender
Association Committee On Racial Equity