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To: [Stevenson, Kirsten](#)
Subject: An opportunity to build trust
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Hello HPS Police Service Board,

I want to add my voice to the amazing voices from the Hamilton Black community that we heard from yesterday at the HCCI press conference.

It's terrible what's happening in our city. We pay for a service that continues to be marred by racial bias and it is actively hurting the Black community. People who are standing up in solidarity, unarmed are treated as criminals and we as the public are asked to put them in the criminal category from the moment they are in the custody of the Police. I say NO. Our justice system is based on people being innocent until proven guilty so why is our police force working actively out of what I deem as treating people as criminals who deserve a certain degree of inhumane treatment until they are proven to be innocent or have their charges dropped? And then at that point, those released should be grateful? Think about that, if you got arrested without a pre-existing trauma, you're coming out with trauma from the experience.

If there is to be any trust built with the Black community, the first steps are these:

- Drop the charges that were laid so quickly to the 6 black youth
- Conduct a proper and transparent judicial investigation into the force used on the Black youth under what contexts and the injuries sustained
- STOP evicting people in encampments (AT LEAST TILL THE SPRING, not a soul needs the parks to be clear so they can look out their window from their warm homes at a clear field, it's foolishness)

Knees shouldn't be on the necks of anyone let alone the Black youth. This Hamilton is theirs in the next generation. No police officer should drag a person by their hand across a field because they are feeling upset. These aren't offences that are slaps on the wrist. They are signs of rot within our police system. As the board, it's your responsibility to hold the police accountable for all of us who are screaming at you about injustice. We're not at the table and you are. With that comes the responsibility that you must take up.

Justin Aitcheson