



May 7, 2018

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL AND EMAIL

Chief of Police William Scott
1245 3rd Street
6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94158

RE: Discrimination Alleged by Muslim Police Officer

Dear Chief Scott:

My name is Jeffrey Wang, and I am an attorney and the California Bar Foundation Legal Fellow at the Council on American-Islamic Relations, San Francisco Bay Area (“CAIR-SFBA”) office. I write today regarding the recent news of a Muslim San Francisco Police Department (“SFPD”) officer’s allegations of the blatant racism and culture of rampant racial and religious bigotry within the SFPD.¹

CAIR-SFBA is disappointed to learn of these allegations of a toxic culture at SFPD. CAIR-SFBA regularly represents members from Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (“AMEMSA”) communities in important, high-stakes disputes involving the exercise of their civil and religious liberties. It is in this capacity that we are sharing the concerns civil-rights and AMEMSA advocacy groups have with the allegations that the Muslim officer recently brought to light. These allegations reflect an atmosphere of egregious workplace harassment and a troubling lack of departmental oversight and accountability.

CAIR-SFBA is concerned about the discriminatory harassment and abuse directed at the Muslim officer by his colleagues. All individuals should be able to work in environments free of discrimination or harassment, regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Additionally, CAIR-SFBA is equally concerned about the alleged derogatory remarks and flippant comments made by officers towards minorities in San Francisco.² Unless substantial steps are taken to change the culture of the police force as a whole, these latest allegations will only erode what little faith the public has in SFPD’s ability to protect and serve communities of color in a competent and unbiased manner. Time and again, SFPD has proven incapable of policing itself.³ Unfortunately, this latest incident demonstrates that not much has changed since SFPD’s most recent race scandal.⁴

¹ See, e.g., Evan Sernoffsky, *Muslim San Francisco cop alleges ‘blatant racism’ on job*, SFGATE (Apr. 10, 2018), <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Muslim-San-Francisco-cop-blatant-sexism-racism-12822700.php>; see also Michael Barba, *Muslim officer blows whistle on ‘blatant racism’ in SFPD*, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER (Apr. 10, 2018), <http://www.sfexaminer.com/muslim-officer-blows-whistle-blatant-racism-sfpd/>.

² See generally Redacted EEO Charge of Discrimination, <http://sfpublicdefender.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/04/EEO-Charge-of-Discriminationredacted.pdf> (last visited Apr. 18, 2018).

³ Press Release, Dep’t of Justice, Department of Justice Launches Comprehensive Review of the San Francisco Police Department (Feb. 1, 2016), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/departement-justice-launches-comprehensive-review-san-francisco-police-department>.

⁴ Alex Emslie, *More SFPD Officers Sent Bigoted Text Messages, Even During ‘Textgate’ Scandal*, KQED NEWS (Mar. 31, 2016), <https://www.kqed.org/news/10915530/five-more-sfpd-officers-sent-bigoted-text-messages-even-during-textgate-scandal>.

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To effectuate meaningful change and prevent a further public crisis of confidence, CAIR-SFBA urges SFPD to:

1. Immediately implement Muslim and Middle Eastern cultural-sensitivity education and training in SFPD's periodic training bulletins, as well as in SFPD Academy's curriculum; and
2. Implement independent review mechanisms to ensure that such additions are successfully executed.

We are of course happy to meet with you to discuss these matters more fully or provide additional information. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Wang', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Wang, Esq.

cc:

San Francisco Mayor Mark Farrell
San Francisco Board of Supervisors
San Francisco Police Commission
San Francisco Department of Police Accountability

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