



Testimony for Paulette Kee-Dudley, UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO on:

Expedited Bill 34-20, Police – Disciplinary Procedures – Police Labor Relations – Duty to Bargain - Amendments

My name is Paulette Kee-Dudley. I have been a Program Coordinator with the Housing Opportunities Commission for the past 30 years. I am also a founding member and current Vice President with UFCW Local 1994 MCGEO.

We represent approximately 1100 sworn and civilian public safety personnel, which includes sworn law enforcement officers. As their collective bargaining representative, Local 1994 urges you to reject Expedited Council Bill 34-20.

In rejecting this change to collective bargaining law, we are not advocating that we should protect bad police officers.

There's no denying that the public safety infrastructure is currently broken. From the disproportionate sentencing and incarceration of our black and brown brothers and sisters, to the violence encountered on the street at the hands of people who should be held to the highest standards of protection. We're as repulsed as anyone by the egregious acts of violence and senseless murders we've witnessed across the country.

But taking away collective bargaining rights should not be the way we begin reforms. We need real solutions to these problems. All too often, supervisors and other leaders point fingers and place blame on unions for their inaction in the workplace.

"We can't fire that bad employee because the union has tied our hands," is an often-used claim.

We say, wrong!

Employers can and should be held accountable for enabling bad and potentially criminal behavior. Police Departments have the responsibility and the discretion to mete out discipline against their employees and to rein in or ultimately fire police officers who violate the law.

Don't make unions and workplace rights the scapegoat for police malfeasance. Unions don't make hiring or firing decisions. But we do believe that collective bargaining rights should afford due process that employees deserve.

Our union is happy to work together with County leaders to make changes to the county's public safety system, but we will not support any law that weakens employee collective bargaining in any way, shape or form.

Local 1994 urges the County Council to reject CB 34-20.