

The Police Governance Project

Eliminating the Vestiges of Slavery in Police, Courts, and Corrections

GOAL: To form a non-profit organization that will

- Work with other organizations¹ to develop a **model state law** that unequivocally repudiates racism in municipal police departments, that establishes police departments as fiduciary agents of the state's police power, and that governs the establishment and work of the municipal police using Justice, Respect, and the Rule of Law as the criteria for discretionary decisions and actions.
- Work with municipal police departments and professional associations to develop a **model code of professional responsibility** that forms the basis for licensing and discipline.
- Work with police departments, professional associations, and citizen organizations to develop policies, institutions, and training designed to **eliminate racism** in police work and to **counteract** values, norms, and customs that support and protect abuse of authority, illegitimate or excessive use of force, official perjury and illegitimate deception, and other violations of law and the fiduciary duties of government agents.

WHY: Notwithstanding federal and state constitutional amendments, judicial decisions, and statutes, the ideologies and moral content of 17th-19th century slavery and 19th-20th century Jim Crow *de jure* segregation continue to poison American society and its institutions in different ways, including through the harassment and subjugation of people of color and the perpetuation of hate, prejudice, and privilege in the dominant white caste. Various agencies of the states' police powers, including most visibly municipal police departments, contribute to this poisoning of life in America and also maintain cultures infused with racism. Municipal police departments exhibit a high degree of dysfunction and systemically bad behavior, which can be seen, for example, in illegitimate and excessive uses of force, endemic and habitual perjury and other illegitimate deception, and a code of silence that impedes proper supervision, accountability, and discipline. Union contracts usurp important aspects of political oversight and control.

A careful analysis of the deep roots of contemporary racism and its perpetration and perpetuation by municipal police departments shows numerous likely causes of these problems, including a failure to subordinate police departments to the Rule of Law and meaningful legislative oversight, the absence of a thoroughgoing code of professional responsibility that forms the basis for licensing and discipline, and the paucity of effective cultural change programs and institutions that counteract racism, prejudice, implicit bias, and other dysfunctional values, norms, and customs.

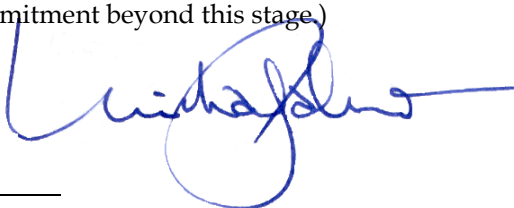
A non-profit organization dedicated to the goals set forth above could, in strategic collaboration with similarly motivated organizations and individuals, have a significant impact on transforming municipal police departments and reducing the vestiges of slavery in our society.

FINANCIAL: The organization will be funded by individual and corporate donations as well as through an initial crowd-funding campaign. We still need to develop a budget.

STATUS: This project is in the concept clarification stage.

ACTION: You decide whether to participate in discussions to clarify the concept and develop an action plan to initiate the project. (No commitment beyond this stage.)

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¹ Potential collaborators include, for example, the [NAACP](#), the [Police Executive Research Forum](#), the [Vera Institute](#), the [Center for Policing Equity](#), the [Lion Institute](#), the [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#), the [ACLU](#), the [Uniform Law Commission](#), the [American Bar Association](#), and the [National Lawyers Guild](#).