

End Cooperation with the Joint Terrorism Task Force 2020

We, the undersigned, call on Portland City Council to end all cooperation between the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) and the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), including disallowing any temporary assignment of PPB officers to work with the JTTF. We further call for expanding the annual reporting required by City resolution 37424 ("Establish parameters of cooperation between Portland Police Bureau and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Joint Terrorism Task Force") to include the nature of closed cases referred from the PPB to the FBI, including the demographics of persons investigated, and the disposition of those cases, which will apply to any cases handled before the end of cooperation. There also must be contemporaneous, oral public testimony taken when the 2020 report is made in January.

The 2019 report¹ on JTTF to City Council said that Homegrown Violent Extremists inspired by "global terrorist organizations such as ISIS or Al Qaeda" were one of the JTTF's "greatest concerns." However the 2020 report², which included demographics and case dispositions, showed that all cases referred by the FBI to PPB were of domestic threats by white people, that none of the closed cases resulted in criminal charges, and, in the cases referred to the FBI by PPB, of the known individuals involved, there was one Black man and the others were all white men. At the 2019 hearing on JTTF withdrawal, Portland residents testified to the trauma caused by FBI investigations of Muslim, Arab, and other community members, and the 2020 report showed no credible threats of terrorism.

Since the murder of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality have been met by more police brutality. Moreover, Attorney General Bill Barr pledged to use the nation's JTTFs to investigate "organizers and instigators."³ JTTFs are part of the communication network of fusion centers that have spied on nonviolent Black Lives Matter protests for years. The Portland JTTF is part of the brutal system of policing that is currently the focus of protests across the United States.

In response to attacks and civil rights violations by federal forces deployed to Portland in "Operation Diligent Valor," City Council passed a resolution ending cooperation with federal agencies directed here by executive order in the operation. Some of these same agencies are members of the Portland JTTF and can still cooperate with PPB on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, ending cooperation with militarized federal police is incomplete unless the City also ends cooperation with the JTTF.

Signed,

Portland Democratic Socialists of America
Portland JACL (Japanese American Citizens League)
Portland Jobs with Justice
350PDX
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) of Oregon
ACLU of Oregon
PAALF Action Fund
Brandon Mayfield (survivor of illegal FBI spying)
Unite Oregon
Peace and Justice Works/Portland Copwatch
Pacific NW Family Circle
Ainsworth United Church of Christ
Jewish Voice for Peace-Portland
Empower Portland
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

Portland Independent Business Bloc
Portland United Against Hate
League of Women Voters of Portland
Japanese American Museum of Oregon
Portland-Metro People's Coalition
BerniePDX
American Friends Service Committee West Region
As the Spirit Moves Us
First Unitarian Church of Portland
Portland's Resistance
Rev. Dr. Janet Parker, Senior Minister, First
Congregational United Church of Christ, Portland*
Oregon DA for the People
Portland Interfaith Clergy Resistance
Portland Immigrant Rights Coalition (PIRC)

*organization listed for identification purposes

For more information or to add your organization's signature to this letter contact Portland Copwatch at 503-236-3065 or <copwatch@portlandcopwatch.org>.

Sent Sept. 8, 2020.

[1] <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/712408>

[2] <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/752679>

[3] USDOJ News release, May 31, 2020, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-william-p-barrs-statement-riots-and-domestic-terrorism>