



Date: 6/25/2020

RE: Comments in support of HB 4203

Central City Concern (CCC) is a non-profit direct service organization that provides integrated primary and behavioral health care, supportive and affordable housing, and employment services to people impacted by homelessness in the Tri-County area. Central City Concern operates about 2,100 units of affordable housing, serves 9,000 patients annually through our 13 Federally Qualified Health Centers, makes 1,200 job placements annually. **Our programs and properties span Districts 33,36,42,43,44,45,46,47,48 and 50**

“Police are doing way too much. They’re not therapists or crisis de-escalation specialists. They’re not housing experts. They’re not social workers. And we’ve allowed them to expand their mission to the point that they think they can do whatever they want. \$15 million cut from the PPD budget was a good start, but I hope that this will be a focus and more of their budget will be redistributed to programs that can actually help people. Thank you!” *Christina Schermerhorn, Health Information Manager, CCC Health Services*

A choke hold or other physical restraints the impact a person’s ability to breath is highly dangerous and unnecessary. Not only is this physically harmful, intentionally inflicting pain and trauma, it ultimately has the opposite effect. A choke hold does not bring someone into “compliance” but rather it elicits immediate fight and flight responses, the body will fight back to stay alive. This becomes a deadly cycle, the body fighting to live while the officer applies more and more pressure thinking they are going to gain “compliance” until the person passes out or worse dies. Cutting off oxygen to the brain for any extended period of time will also cause long-term irreparable damage.

Thank you,

Mercedes Elizalde
Public Police Director
Central City Concern