



Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #3

October 25, 2018

Dear Editor:

As President of the union that represents the rank and file members of the Baltimore Police Department, I am compelled to respond and refute the various suggestions in an article printed on 10/24/2018 titled, "Baltimore audit of rampant overtime spending by city police finds agency lacks controls to track officers' hours".

There is no doubt that the numerous operational systems used by the BPD are antiquated and easily corruptible. For many years and on many different occasions, we have urged both the BPD Command and City officials to do whatever is necessary to move us into the 21st Century. Our investigators continue to use the archaic Lotus Notes to store case information. Our payroll system is inefficient and yes, we still use paper roll books. Within a month our radios will no longer be supported and will require millions of dollars to upgrade to become functional, at best. It is no surprise to our membership that City Finance Director Henry found the various systems described in his report to be so lacking.

As to the issue of overtime costs, let me be clear that there is no widespread abuse as has been suggested. There is, quite obviously, widespread mismanagement but the rank and file members are not responsible for this. The truth is simple: We are short 1,000 Police Officers at a time when the current crime level required at least 3,000 Police Officers in times past. In essence, our manpower is down approximately 1,000 less than what is required yet everyone is scratching their heads trying to determine why Overtime costs are so high. Patrol currently has 650 Officers doing the work that requires well over 1,000. The Homicide Division is at least 15 Detectives short as is the Citywide Shooting Unit. There are Robbery Detectives that are carrying case loads as large as 150, in the first 9 months of this year alone. The only way that the BPD can continue to function, even minimally, is to utilize overtime hours. This, however, is not the fault of our members nor is it one that can just simply be erased. These issues are the result of years of mismanagement by various City and BPD administrations and will take years to repair.

We urge Mayor Pugh to begin now to take whatever steps are necessary to repair and reform the Baltimore Police Department.

Sincerely,

Mike Mancuso
President