

Nassau Legislature approves police reform plan; body camera program among key changes

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A state-mandated reform plan for policing in Nassau was passed easily by the county Legislature Monday.

The Laura Curran/Patrick Ryder Police Reform Plan passed by a 16-3 vote Monday afternoon.

But while the vote passed, it didn't come without controversy. Supporters of "The People's Plan" for police reform demonstrated outside the Nassau County Legislature just before lawmakers heard final statements for and against the plan.

Under the adopted plan, Nassau police will implement its first body camera program, aim for increased transparency and accountability in policing plus a stronger commitment to community-based policing.

But civil rights activists say the reform plan completely misses the mark, and does not address the basic causes of crime and internal racism within the department.

"Nassau's plan has no civilian complaint review board. Nassau's plan has no inspector general's office, Nassau's plan has no oversight. Nassau's plan has no data collection," says Shanequa Levin, of LI United. "These are very crucial things. This is how you create equity."

At one point, civil rights activists walked out of the meeting when legislators would not consider amendments to the plan. Activists say the vote went along racial lines instead of party lines -- with three African American legislators voting down the plan.

The county needed to pass a plan of some sort by April 1, as other departments in the state will need to as well. Those that don't risk a loss of state funding.