

'PEOPLE'S PLAN' FOR REFORM

Activists offer alternative on Nassau policing

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Members of community groups who had been collaborating with Nassau County to reform its police department on Thursday released their own proposal, called "The People's Plan," with recommendations to change county police practices.

A 310-page document includes 12 major areas for reform, including the county police department's handling of mental health crises, civilian and internal complaints, traffic stops and search warrants.

It also calls for creation of a county Office of Police Inspector General as well as more anti-bias training and mental health checks for officers.

Frederick Brewington, a civil rights attorney and one of the authors, called the plan "a thoughtful, detailed approach to police reform."

"This is how the governor had envisioned it [reforms] would happen — not from the top down but from a broad base in the community on how we want to be able to interact with our police," Brewington said.

After the death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis in May, Gov. Andrew M.



A county plan on policing reform had been filed with the Nassau Legislature on Tuesday.

Cuomo issued an executive order asking each police agency in the state to evaluate practices including use of force, crowd management, bias training and response to citizen complaints, or risk the loss of state funds.

The order requires each agency to submit proof they've modernized their policies. County and town lawmakers must approve the plans, and the municipalities must submit their plans by April 1.

On Tuesday, Nassau County Executive Laura Curran and Po-

lice Commissioner Patrick Ryder filed a 395-page reform plan with the county legislature.

The administration's plan includes detailed proposals for improving collection of racial and ethnic data from motorist traffic stops and implementing a body camera program for county police.

It also contains initiatives to diversify county police ranks and boost outreach to minority communities.

In letters to community advocates and county legislators,

Curran, a Democrat, described her her plan as a draft and said the administration was waiting to consider The People's Plan.

On Thursday, Curran spokesman Michael Fricchione said the community advocates' "presentation was thoughtful and passionate. Clearly, these advocates for reform spent a lot of time on their plan. We need to review it thoroughly and give it full consideration. We believe at the end of this process many of our reforms will align."

Tracey Edwards, NAACP

Long Island regional director, said she believed the plan the Curran administration submitted "goes to show how much we still have to do to achieve real structural reform."

"I call on the legislators to step up and work with the community so we can truly achieve police reform that is going to help all communities," Edwards said.

Brewington and Edwards were among about two dozen advocates who resigned from a community panel appointed by the Curran administration to work with the police department on reform plans to submit to the state. The advocates said they were frustrated the administration was not addressing their ideas.

They also complained that an initial version of Curran's reform proposal was discussed in a legislative hearing on Jan. 7 before the community groups got the chance to review it.

Another legislative hearing on police reform is scheduled for Wednesday in Mineola.

"We want to hear from all of the parties interested in police reform," said Legis. Denise Ford (D-Long Beach), public safety committee chairwoman.

The People's Plan was written by representatives of three major advocacy groups: Long Island Advocates for Police Accountability; Long Island United to Transform Policing and Community Safety; and United for Justice in Policing Long Island.

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