

LEGISLATORS SEEK INDEPENDENT WATCHDOG OVER THE NYPD

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(Albany, NY) Senator Kevin Parker and Assemblyman Karim Camara have introduced legislation that establishes an independent inspector general for the New York City Police Department. In recent years we have witnessed serious abuses by the NYPD, whether for racially and religious discriminatory policies such as stop and frisk, the wholesale surveillance of the Muslim community in New York City and other jurisdictions, and the mistreatment of the Occupy Wall St. protesters. In some of these situations the public was given misinformation and even deliberately misled.

The Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigations oversees inspectors general for all city agencies except the New York Police Department, which does not have an inspector general. Instead, the NYPD has an internal affairs bureau that reports to the police commissioner. This bill creates an independent inspector general who would be appointed by and report to the Commissioner of Investigations.

“No one is above the law, not even law enforcement. This legislation seeks to restore the public trust and honor the heroism and service of thousands of officers. By creating an independent inspector general, the NYPD will have an independent watchdog to ensure the integrity of the Department like other state and federal law enforcement entities,” said Parker.

"While the overwhelming majority of NYC police officers are exemplary in their conduct and beyond dedicated in serving and protecting the public, several recent incidences of alleged abuse and possible egregious misconduct call for greater scrutiny and accountability of the police department. This legislation is a step in the right direction to restore the public trust. Appointing an independent Inspector General of the NYPD is in line with every major agency in NYC, and serves as a way to increase accountability and restore integrity. We urge both houses of the legislature to pass this bill and the Governor to sign it into law." Assemblyman Karim Camara

"To sustain the integrity of our Law Enforcement work force, a system that is accountable, transparent and independent is critical. We need to ensure public faith in a process that examines abuses, corruption and the undermining of the civil rights and privacy that are the right and privilege of our residents." State Senator Eric Adams

“We are all familiar with motto ‘to protect and serve,’ but over the years it has been evident that this motto has not been adhered to by all those who wear the shield. Many, if not most, officers serve honorably and with reverence to this motto, but the select few who blatantly disregard it are doing a disservice to themselves, the entire police force, and the communities within which they serve. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*, or, Who watches the watchmen? This question gets to the heart of the matter and exemplifies the need for an Inspector General for the NYPD. As legislators we must do all that we can to ensure the safety and well-being of the public. This

legislation is an important step towards achieving that goal and I am proud to be a co-sponsor.”
State Senator Bill Perkins

“We applaud the efforts of Senator Parker and Assemblyman Camara for introducing legislation that establishes an independent inspector general for the New York Police Department. We agree the police department cannot police itself. For many years we have called for greater oversight of the NYPD. This is a step in the right direction.” Hazel Dukes, President NAACP New York State Conference

"We applaud the efforts of Senators Parker, Adams and Perkins to strengthen transparency and oversight of the NYPD through an inspector general. Independent oversight of this kind will make the police stronger, not weaker." Faiza Patel, Co-Director Liberty & National Security Program, Brennan Center for Justice

"This bill is an important and welcome initiative. We hope that the establishment of an independent Inspector General will help strengthen trust in law enforcement -- trust that has been damaged by recent news regarding the New York Police Department." Asim Rehman, Vice President of the Muslim Bar Association of New York

“Revelations about race-based stop and frisk practices, overbroad surveillance measures, gun-running and ticket fixing are just a few examples of why the NYPD is in desperate need of vigorous independent oversight. For the nation's largest police force to function unchecked is unacceptable and dangerous.” Nermeen Arastu, Staff Attorney Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund

About Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse community that consists of 311,000 constituents in Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington and Borough Park. He has one of the largest Caribbean-American concentrations in the state. He is the Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, former Majority Whip and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.