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April 4, 2013

The Honorable Michael Bloomberg
Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

The Honorable Raymond Kelly
Commissioner
New York Police Department
One Police Plaza
New York, NY 10038

Dear Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner Kelly:

As you may know, I represent the East Flatbush community that recently suffered a terrible tragedy: the loss of Kimani Gray, and the days of violence that ensued in that shooting's aftermath. It is my belief that in addition to the anger resulting from the death of a child whom the system failed, which is horrific and tragic, those days of protests and unnecessary violence also expressed the frustration of a community whose relationship with New York City's Police Department (NYPD) was eroded and poisoned by the NYPD's conduct of its "Stop and Frisk" policy. Therefore, in addition to requesting you to conduct a full, fair and independent investigation into the facts and details of Kimani Gray's shooting, I am also asking that the NYPD completely reevaluate the manner in which it carries out its "Stop and Frisk" policy so that it is not, and cannot be reasonably charged to be, based on racial profiling.

Kimani's death, like the untimely death and victimization of so many young people in our community is not an isolated event but a failure of the system, primarily our educational system that fails to engage and prepare young people and their families. Our children should learn in schools that are not merely teaching to a test, but where these young minds are nurtured and allowed to innovate. In the past two decades however, we have witnessed the elimination of music, art, athletics, dance, and after school programs from our schools. These must be restored. We must also expand the Beacon schools program, which we know provides a safe learning environment for children and their caregivers. By restoring the missing instructional programs

that challenge and grow children's minds, we will reignite their interest in learning, not merely in doing better on standardized tests. By providing safe alternatives and structures through schools, and a place where the entire family and community can be engaged, in the place of gangs and violence, we will be able to create not only physical security in our neighborhoods, but we will also be taking steps toward economic security.

Instead of treating communities of color as criminals, if the City truly wished to improve community safety, we must invest in educational and economic opportunities for our young people. The solution too much of the problem festering in New York's neighborhoods is not rocket science, it is returning to holistic and community-based education, and remembering that well-rounded individuals make, and have, better choices.

Second, as you may know, East Flatbush is a neighborhood that suffers from high levels of criminal activity. For the past decade however, New York City's solution to crime has been to use a "Stop and Frisk" policy that has objectively targeted young men of color in disproportionate numbers. This strategy breeds contempt and ill-will toward those whose responsibility is to ensure the safety of our great City. That is not the relationship we need between New York's youth and the NYPD; it is not a relationship that leads in a positive direction or makes the NYPD's task of protecting our neighborhoods and ourselves easier and more successful. And sadly, the completely indefensible destruction of property and violence against storeowners may have erupted from the anger stemming from longstanding frustrations with Stop and Frisk, as much as it did from the shooting death of yet another youngster.

I thank you for your consideration of my requests and look forward to working with you to make the streets of New York safe for our children and their families. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at (718) 629-6401.

Yours in Partnership,



KEVIN PARKER

cc: Carol Gray
Rep. Yvette Clark
Rep. Hakeem Jeffries
Sen. Eric Adams
Sen. Velmanette Montgomery
Sen. John Sampson
A/M Inez Barron
A/M Karim Camara
A/M Nick Perry
Councilman Charles Barron
Councilman Jumaane Williams
Rev. Al Sharpton
Bishop Orlando Findlayter