



New York State Law Enforcement Officers Union, Council 82

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

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June 26, 2020

Mr. Lee Saunders, AFSCME President
1625 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036-5687

Dear President Saunders,

Council 82 respectfully requests that AFSCME not endorse or support any candidate or incumbent politician for any local, state, and federal elected office who supports or advocates for “defunding the police” or the reallocation/redirection of funding away from police and sheriff departments. As you know, a law enforcement department’s budget is comprised primarily of labor costs, with the balance in operations, training, equipment, technology, vehicle maintenance, facility maintenance, and capital improvements. For years, police department administrators and municipal leaders have aggressively reduced or eliminated what they determined were unwarranted and unnecessary expenses. They have automated key operations. They have reduced overall staffing through fewer hires and by not filling vacant positions. What more can be cut or redirected from police department budgets that won’t result in fewer cops, underpaid cops, slower response times, less training, shabby or faulty equipment, or deteriorating stations? What more can be cut from law enforcement department budgets that won’t ultimately result in dangerous and unsafe working conditions for the officers and even less safe communities for our citizens?

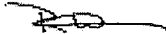
None of us are against investing additional taxpayer dollars in social services, youth services, housing, education, or other community programs – but all of us should be against any dismantling or crippling of our police and sheriff departments. None of us are against legitimate reforms – but all of us should be against any reforms that will put police and sheriff officers in harm’s way, make the terms and conditions of their employment worse, and make all of us less safe.

We feel strongly that AFSCME should not endorse or support any candidate or incumbent politician for any local, state, and federal elected office who supports or advocates for “defunding the police” or the reallocation/redirection of funding away from police and sheriff departments. We expect AFSCME to support politicians who advocate for better wages and better working conditions for law enforcement officers and not support those who would allow or create conditions in which officers are put in harm’s way. We expect AFSCME to support politicians who stand up and do something or say something on behalf

of law enforcement officers to calm the reckless and escalating anti-cop rhetoric in this Country and not support those who don't or won't advocate for them.

I know that you know that the overwhelming majority of law enforcement officers are good and decent people who willingly risk their lives to keep all of us safe and who deserve and have earned our respect, gratitude, and loyalty. I know that you know that there are literally tens of millions of legitimate and positive encounters between them and our fellow citizens every year. The infinitesimal percentage of those encounters which are illegitimate, negative, and sometimes even unspeakably tragic, which should never and hopefully one day will never occur, are properly dealt with by the justice system. Calls for "defunding the police" or reallocating/redirecting funding away from police and sheriff departments show a complete lack of thought or common sense and they undermine and endanger law enforcement union members in their jobs. Council 82 members cannot and will not support any politician who would advocate such foolishness.

In Solidarity,



Ronald Walsh

President, Council 82

Cc: Council 82 Executive Board, Presidents and Members

Ennio Corsi, Council 82 General Counsel

Brian McDonnell, AFSCME NY Political & Legislative Director

John English, AFSCME NYS Field Services Director

Jim Howell, AFSCME East Region Director