



CITY OF CHICAGO

COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR
PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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**INTERIM COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
RESPONDS TO SUN TIMES AND WBEZ ARTICLE THAT MISINTERPRETS CPD POLICY ON HATE
AND EXTREMIST GROUPS**

CHICAGO- Today, Sun Times/WBEZ reporters Tom Schuba and Dan Mihalopoulos published an article titled, "No Extremist Groups on List Barring Chicago Police Officer Membership, Only Street Gangs," that significantly misrepresents a critically important Chicago Police Department policy that was recently revised by the interim Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability.

For years, the CPD repeatedly imposed little or no discipline in situations where there was evidence that police officers had associated with groups that embrace or promote hateful, racist, or extremist views. CPD policy stated that officers were not allowed to "associate" with "criminal organizations," but the policy did not clearly define "criminal organization" or what it meant to "associate" with a criminal organization. Among other things, the old policy did not make clear whether police officers were allowed to associate with groups that advocate for prejudice, discrimination, or efforts to overthrow or destroy the government.

Earlier this year, following months of work with CPD, and after receiving significant community feedback, CCPSA established a new, strengthened policy. The policy provides clear definitions of those previously unclear terms, making it much easier to discipline officers who engage with groups that advocate for prejudice, discrimination, or efforts to overthrow or destroy the government.

Schuba's and Mihalopoulos' story misinterprets the new policy by suggesting that the new policy could make it harder to discipline police officers for associations with extremist groups if the names of those organizations aren't on a list of organizations that CPD previously identified as off limits. But one key purpose of the policy change is to rely less on lists that clearly weren't working to produce real accountability.

"The new policy focuses on prohibited behavior and makes clear that officers who engage in that behavior or associate with organizations that engage in that behavior can be disciplined. And that includes being fired. There is absolutely no requirement for an organization to be on a prohibited list in order for CPD to take action," said Community Commission President Anthony Driver Jr.



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"Under the previous policy, you could put the Proud Boys on a list of organizations you couldn't join, but then the Proud Boys could decide tomorrow to become the Nice Boys, and then members could say 'I'm not a Proud Boy, I'm a Nice Boy, and that's not on the list.' That policy made it easier to avoid discipline and accountability. We don't care what you call yourself, we care what you do."

"People who advocate for prejudice, discrimination, or efforts to overthrow or destroy the government have no home in the Chicago Police Department. They should not wear a badge or carry a gun. And reporters like Schuba and Mihalopoulos should help police officers and civilians to understand what the policy is and, together with oversight bodies like the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability, work to hold CPD accountable for properly enforcing it," Driver added.

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