



We, the undersigned organizations that care deeply about a safe, thriving City of Portland, stand firmly behind our City Councilors who are working to create real safety for all Portlanders.

We also condemn any potential attempted intimidation tactics by Portland police and the Portland police union towards anyone in our City, including our City Councilors.

All Portlanders deserve to be safe regardless of where we live, what we look like, or how much money we make. Community safety requires real solutions which include:

- Prioritizing police for serious crimes such as shootings and physical violence, and prioritizing the trained first responders at Portland Street Response for non-criminal situations involving homelessness, drug addiction, mental illness, and other community and public safety situations that do not require an armed response by the City.
- Preventing and addressing police misconduct and violence because no one in Portland should fear mistreatment or violence from a police officer.
- Making sure the City addresses the root causes of crime, which requires the City to allocate sufficient dollars to support stability and services in all communities.

Councilors Sameer Kanal and Angelita Morillo have been champions for real solutions to safety, and both of them have prioritized police accountability.

However, it appears that some Portland police officers, their leadership, or the Portland police union may disagree with the Councilors and wish to “demonstrate” their disagreement in a public manner. Here is what we know:

- The [Oregonian reported](#) that five uniformed officers showed up at a March town hall held by Councilor Kanal, unannounced and not at his invitation, and

four days later, two uniformed officers showed up at Councilor Morillo's town hall, unannounced and not at her invitation.

- The officers made no effort to communicate with the councilors ahead of, or at, their town halls, except when asked why they were present. Some officers even appeared to evade explaining their presence; when Councilor Morillo asked who had sent them, they referred to a lieutenant but refused to provide the name.
- The first police "visit" happened within five days and the second one within nine days of a Community and Public Safety Committee meeting on February 25, which meeting Councilors Kanal and Morillo both participated in.
- At the February 25 meeting, Councilor Kanal proposed revising the term "bias" for the new Community Board for Police Accountability to a definition more consistent with legal standards, and this drew [public vitriol](#) from police union President Aaron Schmautz.
- Other city councilors reported that they did not experience what Councilors Kanal and Morillo experienced, and Councilors Kanal and Morillo have been vocal advocates for police accountability.
- Portland police have a long pattern of direct and indirect involvement in tactics of retaliation, intimidation, and politically-motivated action. Examples of these concerning tactics are set out in a [press statement](#) about this letter.

Given the timing of events and other information set out above, the logical question is whether Portland police or their union were trying to intimidate and bully city councilors from pursuing police accountability efforts for our city.

Also, it is very concerning that so many officers went to councilor events they were not invited to – in uniform and on city time and dollar – while the Portland police persistently complain about their "[staffing challenges](#)." It is also concerning that the [Portland police appear to engage in significant and expensive "copaganda" public relations to shape public perception](#), instead of their core duties related to public safety. All of this is especially worrisome because of the City's [longer police response times](#) and [unacceptably low crime clearance rates](#).

Ironically, it is this type of police conduct that drove 82% of Portland voters to approve the Community Board for Police Accountability, making it one of the most popular ballot measures in Oregon ever approved.

Particularly in the age of Trump's bullying tactics and attacks on democracy and the rule of law, it is unconscionable that our local police may be resorting to attempted intimidation and bullying tactics to try to affect important public policy decisions that affect real safety solutions for all Portlanders.

As a community, we denounce any type of intimidation and bullying tactics to influence important public policy debates and decisions, particularly from armed and uniformed public employees.

We demand accountability. We ask Portland City leadership to do everything in their power to investigate, address, and prevent any form of intimidation and retaliation by the police.

With significant concern,

ACLU of Oregon
APANO Communities United Fund + APANO Action Fund
Basic Rights Oregon
Breach Collective
Cascadia Magical Activists
Communities and Postal Workers United
Communication Workers of America Local 7901
Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN)
Dandelion House Catholic Worker
Don't Shoot Portland
Extinction Rebellion PDX
Imagine Black
Next Up Action Fund
Portland Democratic Socialists of America
Showing Up for Racial Justice PDX
Urban League of Portland
Unite Oregon