

Testimony of Chief of Police Michael Reese, Portland Police Bureau (PPB)¹

in support of legislation²

“Regarding PPB cooperation with the FBI for the purpose of combating terrorism,”

Portland City Council Meeting of April 28, 2011³

I want to thank Mayor Adams and the City Council for the time to give testimony today, and for the thoughtful process that we have been engaged in regarding the issue of public safety in our partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (sic). This process has given members of the community and stakeholders the opportunity to voice their opinions and provide City Council with important information to help discern a course of action. . . .

Legitimate questions have been raised about privacy rights and public safety as law enforcement conducts investigations into terrorist activity. ***I firmly believe constitutionally protected rights and public safety are not at opposite ends of a spectrum and nor are they mutually exclusive.*** It is our duty as policy officers and as a community to be vigilant regarding both of these positions.

I am also concerned that some people in Portland will see our participation in terrorist investigations as threatening. Relationships between the community and the police are built on trust and we have worked diligently to build positive connections with communities that feel particularly impacted by these types of investigations. In fact, at a recent public meeting on the JTTF, a person remarked that the Police Bureau and Arab Muslim community relationship was exceptionally strong. I would hope that as we move forward, those communities will give us an opportunity to show we continue to be trustworthy and capable of protecting the community and individual privacy rights. I believe we have an opportunity at this critical juncture to improve our relationship with our federal partners and with the community.

This resolution allows for the Portland police bureau to participate with the JTTF in a collaborative manner where we are at the table, attending roll calls, briefings, and other meetings; where cases are developed and investigations are discussed. That keeps us in the information-sharing loop – which is exactly what most people expect from all law enforcement agencies in light of past communication failures. This also provides for local oversight and input into how and when investigations are opened. Lastly, when appropriate and approved by the Chief of Police, in consultation with the commissioner in charge of the police, resources from the police bureau may be allocated to investigations on an as-needed basis.

¹ Partial transcript, emphasis added.

² Portland City Council Resolution #36859, adopted unanimously April 28, 2011. Now City of Portland Binding City Policy BCP-PSF-7.01. Available at: <http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?a=349687&c=54882> .

³ Video available of the hearing and all testimony at: <http://www.portlandonline.com/index.cfm?c=49508&a=347091> .

I would ask your support of this resolution as we move forward.
