Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2024-728, **Version:** 1

A resolution requesting the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department implement a zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct.

WHEREAS, on August 26, 2024, the Nashville Community Review Board ("CRB") approved its final report regarding a zero-tolerance sexual misconduct policy for the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department ("MNPD"); and

WHEREAS, the CRB's recommendation for a zero-tolerance sexual misconduct policy for MNPD comes after actions to address sexual misconduct by both the Women's Caucus of the Metropolitan Council and former Mayor John Cooper; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, several allegations of sexual misconduct against MNPD were issued by Silent No Longer Tennessee on behalf of 19 women. In response, the Women's Caucus of the Metropolitan Council worked with the Metropolitan Human Resources Department and the Office of Family Safety to increase support for Metro employees who have suffered physical or sexual abuse at home or in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, in addition, former Mayor John Cooper's Policing Policy Commission's November 2020 report, which called for several action items for MNPD, including a recommendation that MNPD create a zero-tolerance policy around sexual assault and sexual harassment; and

WHEREAS, the Policing Policy Commission report recommended a timeline of 12 to 18 months to complete this action item. In response to the report, Chief John Drake stated that harassment and discrimination would not be tolerated and when reported would be investigated thoroughly. In addition, MNPD implemented the "Not on My Watch" initiative where MNPD employees can report misconduct via a phone line 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and

WHEREAS, while these actions are encouraging, a formal zero-tolerance policy should be established regarding sexual misconduct; and

WHEREAS, since the 2020 Silent No More Complaints, 50 more complaints have surfaced. Failure to implement a formal zero-tolerance policy as suggested by the CRB will put the wellbeing and safety of Metro employees at risk; and

WHEREAS, such a policy would assist in building public trust with MNPD, which has suffered due to allegations of misconduct, including the allegations of sexual misconduct issued by Silent No Longer Tennessee as well as a 61-page complaint filed with the CRB by a former Nashville police lieutenant against MNPD; and

WHEREAS, in order to increase public trust and transparency in the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, the Metropolitan Council requests that MNPD create a policy in line with the recommendations from the CRB.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as requesting the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department implement a zero-tolerance policy for sexual misconduct in line with the policy recommendations set forth by the Nashville Community Review Board in their August 26, 2024, policy advisory report.

Section 2. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.