



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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A resolution requesting the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, Davidson County Sheriff's Office, Nashville Fire Department, and Civil Service Commission to review current personnel policies and enact new regulations regarding participation in hate groups and paramilitary gangs as well as the misuse of water cannons and fire hoses.

WHEREAS, a local government requires the trust of its residents in order to carry out its functions; and

WHEREAS, the actions of local government employees, including the participation in hate groups and paramilitary gangs, undermines trust in a local government; and

WHEREAS, in addition, law enforcement officers and emergency service workers who support or affiliate with hate groups and paramilitary gangs undermine the mission of their agency or department by allying themselves with lawbreakers and by undermining the department's efforts to ensure equitable policing and earn community trust; and

WHEREAS, as used in this resolution, "hate group" means any person or group that advocates, incites, or provides material supports for criminal acts or criminal conspiracies or that promote violence, or unlawful discrimination toward racial, religious, ethnic, sexual, gender, or other groups or classes of individuals; and

WHEREAS, as used in this resolution, "paramilitary gang" means person or group that advocates the overthrow of the U.S. Government or any state, municipality, tribal, or other government by force or violence or any unlawful means including as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated § 39-17-314; and

WHEREAS, several hate groups and paramilitary gangs actively seek to enlist current and former law enforcement officers and members of the military to benefit from their social credibility and firearms expertise; and

WHEREAS, when law enforcement officers join, support, or advocate for hate groups or paramilitary gangs, they raise questions not only about their own fairness, judgment, and commitment to lawful policing, but also impair the credibility and legitimacy of a department that aims to equitably serve all communities within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, unlawful political violence perpetuated by members of such hate groups and paramilitary gangs is the only type of violence and fundamentalism in our nation's history that has been state sanctioned and benefited from deep institutional penetration; and

WHEREAS, the Brennan Center for Justice has documented that since 2000, law enforcement officers and officials with alleged connections to white supremacist groups or far-right militant activities have been exposed throughout the country including Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, the FBI's 2015 Counterterrorism Policy Directive and Policy Guide warns that "domestic terrorism investigations focused on militia extremists, white supremacist extremists, and sovereign citizen extremists often have identified active links to law enforcement officers"; and

WHEREAS, the presence of hate groups and paramilitary gangs within our public safety institutions endangers

the entire community and poses a significant national security risk; and

WHEREAS, the dangers of participation in hate groups or paramilitary gangs does not solely involve participation by law enforcement and public safety personnel - the participation of any local government employee with these groups undermines the trust of the public and impairs the function of a local government; and

WHEREAS, in addition to concerns regarding hate groups and paramilitary gangs, excessive and unnecessary force by law enforcement, including fire department personnel, also poses a significant concern for the public; and

WHEREAS, water cannons and high pressure firehoses were first used for crowd control in the 1930's in Germany and, by the 1960's, were frequently used during Civil Rights protests in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the use of water cannons and high pressure firehoses against protesters and demonstrators is a practice known as "perp washing"; and

WHEREAS, perp washing has a high risk of causing hypothermia, direct trauma from the pressurized water, secondary injury from being knocked down or colliding with object; and

WHEREAS, perp washing has significant practical and human rights concerns including civil rights intimidation, indiscriminate and disproportionate use, and collective punishment; and

WHEREAS, the incitement of unlawful violence degrades the mission of government to function and serve the entirety of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, Davidson County Sheriff's Office, Nashville Fire Department, and all Metro departments have a commitment to ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to prohibit biased and unlawful behavior that undermine their vital role in serving the community.

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

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council hereby requests the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department, Davidson County Sheriff's Office, and Nashville Fire Department review their current personnel policies applicable to law enforcement officers, emergency service workers, and first responders and enact new regulations regarding participation in hate groups and paramilitary gangs as well as regulations to prohibit the use of high-pressured water cannons or fire hoses an anti-personnel and crowd control tactic, often called "perp washing." In addition, the Metropolitan Council requests that each department submit a report to the Metropolitan Council regarding the review of their current policies and the enactment of new regulations as requested in this resolution. Such report should be presented to the Metropolitan Council's Public Health and Safety Committee no later than June 30, 2025.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council further requests the Civil Service Commission review current personnel policies applicable to civil service employees and enact new regulations regarding participation in hate groups and paramilitary gangs as well as regulations to prohibit the use of high-pressured water cannons or fire hoses an anti-personnel and crowd control tactic, often called "perp washing." In addition, the Metropolitan Council requests that the Metropolitan Human Resources Department submit a report to the Metropolitan Council regarding the review of current civil service policies and the enactment of new regulations as requested in this resolution. Such report should be presented to the Metropolitan Council's Public Health and Safety Committee no later than June 30, 2025.

Section 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan

Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.