



Chief Eric Winstrom
Grand Rapids Police Department
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April 14, 2022

Dear Chief Winstrom:

I am writing following the apparent murder of Patrick Lyoya.

I have a proposal that the Grand Rapids Police Department lead the nation toward peace and safety by discontinuing all traffic stops. I believe that traffic stops are unconstitutional. They violate the right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure and override the protections of due process.

I shared these ideas with elected officials in 2020, after George Floyd was murdered. Now I share these ideas with you.

To me traffic stops are a vestige of our racist past, when bounties were offered to trap and return runaway slaves. I suggest replacing traffic stops with summons and ticketing by U.S. Postal Service and digital technologies.

Traffic stops do not make our communities safer and too often turn a police officer into judge, jury, and executioner. When a wealthy white suspect is summoned to court for a nonviolent offense, this is done without physical intervention and threat. A white suspect is given time to find counsel who can represent him or her in court. This enables the suspect to avoid the trauma of court and to have adequate legal support to fairly address charges.

I am outraged that a local officer would use lethal force against a resident over a relatively trivial legal matter, and apparently without cause. This tragedy could have been avoided by putting an end to the practice of traffic stops.

My hope is that in addition to discontinuing traffic stops locally, you will call upon police chiefs all over the nation to replace these stops with summons and ticketing via U.S. Postal Service and digital technology.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marsha Plafkin
Founder/Sole Proprietor

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