

## Testimony against Bill 7-21

Council President Hucker

County Council

Greetings

My name is Robert Alex Stubblefield and I am a lifelong resident of Montgomery County. I am also an African-American man in this county who has been fighting for racial justice since childhood and I write this testimony against Bill 7-21: The Police-SRO-Building Positive Relationships Within Schools Act. This bill was solely created to not only counter Bill 46-20 which would actually be a step forward for racial justice, but this bill is insulting. It is insulting to the people who have been fighting for racial equity so this county can live up to the myth of being progressive. It is insulting to people who were out there protesting over this past year during the summer of the glorious uprisings chanting Black Lives Matter like a spiritual. It is insulting to the families of those who have lost their children to police violence in this county: Peter N’Jang, Emmanuel Okutuga, Robert White, Finan Berhe and most recently Nana Kwanena Ocran (To those who are unaware Nana means King and Kwamena was a king of the Fante in Ghana). More importantly, it is the peak of hypocrisy that the same council who all over social media and in public statements, said Black Lives Matter and demand while in reality it was nothing more than political grandstanding.

I wish I could say I am surprised that this bill is being considered, but that would be insulting to common sense and the intelligence of the community. The fact that the drafters of this bill have been holding the water for police and take donations from the FOP, one of the biggest barriers of police accountability should not be surprising to anyone in this county. The fact that they advocate for more training for SRO’s is laughable at best. They have all the training and the world and from not only my experiences but that off all the testimonies from high school students about how the SRO’s know how to act right when the student is white, but as we have seen both here and nationally when the student is black or Hispanic, it is beat down and arrest first which sets up the school to prison pipeline. I’m angry and upset that despite all the evidence both from your own OLO and Racial equity commission but from national experts that SRO’s are more harm than good and the fact that this bill was not only crafted but is being heard is incredulous. I know that some will say that there is nothing racist about this bill because a black man wrote it but as Zora Neale Hurston once eloquently stated, “All skinfolk ain’t kinfolk” In other words, what this bill does if anything is just as our fight is against covert white

supremacy in this county, it is also against the black misleadership class who would rather attach themselves to the white power structure to fight for crumbs of master's table instead of justice for the community. If this bill passes, I don't ever want to hear the words Black Lives Matter come from anybody's lips on this body ever again. If this bill passes, you are all guilty of perpetuating the school to prison pipeline instead of creating a school to prosperity pipeline. If this bill passes, this just confirms what those of us at the groundroot already knew and that is this county does not care about black people and that we must come up and create alternatives that will actually work.

In closing, do not pass this bill. Pass 46-20 and actually commit to building racial equity in the schools and the community. Listen to the voices of the community and follow your own law of Racial equity and Social Justice Act and make this a reality here.