



RUSA BILL S20-12

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Sponsor: Legislative Affairs Committee; Public Relations Committee; University Affairs Committee

A Bill Addressing Reform & Accountability for the Rutgers University Police Department

Whereas, police discrimination against racial minorities has been well-documented across the United States¹, with the Black Lives Matter movement advocating for police reform and for an end to illegal, unethical, and unconstitutional behavior from officers;

Whereas, at Rutgers University, police discrimination against racial minorities is incredibly prevalent, with officers often mistreating Black, African-American, and other racial minority groups (including clubs, fraternities, sororities, and cultural organizations),

Whereas, the Rutgers University Student Assembly has various executive and legislative departments which are ready, able, and eager to reimagine community-police relations on campus, and to improve the lives of Black, African-American, and minority students,

Be it hereby resolved, that the Rutgers University Student Assembly (RUSA, or the Assembly) introduces this Bill as a method of accountability for any incident of misconduct on the part of the Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD), including but not limited to misconduct, discrimination, and/or dereliction of duty.

Be it further resolved, that the Assembly – through its relevant bodies, organizations, and representatives – shall aggressively and thoroughly pursue the following reforms:

1. The RUPD shall give a monthly written report to the Assembly detailing how the Police Department is helping to protect marginalized groups, and how officers have interacted with marginalized groups on campus. The report shall:

¹ Browne, Jaron. "Rooted in Slavery: Prison Labor Exploitation." *Race, Poverty & the Environment* 14, no. 1 (2007): 42-44. Accessed June 19, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/41555136.

- a. Detail clear and apparent efforts to deal with discrimination and hate crimes on campus including against minorities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and students with disabilities;
 - b. Detail substantive efforts to develop communication between the police unit and organizations of color;
 - c. Detail any and all cases of misconduct conducted by a member of the RUPD, especially regarding instances of discrimination or misconduct²;
 - d. Detail substantive efforts to develop conversations within the police unit on fair and non-discriminatory policing;
 - e. Be distributed to relevant stakeholders and representatives of the Black and minority communities at Rutgers, including but not limited to United Black Council, Latino Student Council, the Rutgers N.A.A.C.P., the Native American Cultural Association, and other groups which would benefit from having knowledge of these incidents.
2. Internal reforms and changes within the management and culture of the Rutgers University Police Department, including – but in no ways limited to – the following:
- a. If an RUPD officer is accused of committing an offense, then there must be substantive and comprehensive investigation conducted independently by the Rutgers University administration. Information regarding the initial accusations and the course of these investigations should be conveyed to the Assembly.
 - b. Members of the RUPD shall not be allowed to partake or interfere in investigations related to another RUPD officer.
 - c. If an RUPD officer is convicted of any offense, the Rutgers University administration should have the authority to terminate the officer from their position. If an officer is not convicted of their accused offense, the University shall still retain the records of the officer’s alleged offenses.
 - d. The Rutgers University administration must investigate any false arrests, illegal searches, excessive use of force, and other abuses of power³, especially as they would pertain to Black, African-American, and other minority groups on campus.
 - e. Efforts towards the ends described in Section 2 of this clause shall be described and included in the report described in Section 1 of this clause.

² Historically, the Rutgers University Police Department has released yearly reports which summarized incidents of police misconduct. See [Internal Affairs Statistics – 2019 Calendar Year](#). The report given to the Assembly would be substantially different from this report in that it would be substantively more in-depth regarding each specific incident. It is also worth noting that “[n]o department employee was assessed a fine or suspension of 10 days or more for complaints received and/or investigations commenced during the 2019 calendar year in relation to sustained conduct unbecoming of their respective title”, despite there being over 75 cases.

³ This is by no means an exhaustive list of what constitutes abuses of power. An abuse of power should include any incident where, through their virtue as a member of the RUPD, an officer feels open and able to conduct themselves however they see fit, even if such conduct would be seen as unreasonable, abusive, or unnecessary by any reasonable outside observer. See [FIGHTING POLICE ABUSE: A COMMUNITY ACTION MANUAL](#). By the ACLU.

Be it finally resolved, the Public Relations Committee, Diversity & Inclusion Ad-Hoc,⁴ and the Rutgers University Police Department shall coordinate activities which connect the Police Department with the student body through the following:

1. The Committee, Diversity & Inclusion Ad-Hoc, and Police Department shall work to establish meetings with cultural centers and organizations on campus to discuss matters of police brutality through town halls, round-tables, open forums, and other methods of communication.
2. The Diversity & Inclusion Ad-Hoc Committee should work with the Public Relations Committee, and other pertinent bodies, to research and then conduct a “Know Your Rights Campaign,” focused on educating marginalized groups of their local and federal rights, and promoting the idea that police officers should not abuse or misuse their power.
3. The Committee, Diversity & Inclusion Ad-Hoc, and Police Department must pursue substantive reform and, as such, they are tasked with fulfilling the duties and recommendations previously outlined in this legislation. The Diversity & Inclusion Ad-Hoc, in particular, shall work with Black, African-American, and minority groups on campus to gather recommendations regarding reforms for the Police Department and shall aggressively and thoroughly pursue them.

⁴ Action was taken pursuant to Art. IV Sec. 7(b) of the Rutgers University Standing Rules. Created by President Nicholas LABELLE on June 30, 2020 through Executive Order 2020-03 [[Citation](#)] with Ilce Perez presiding as director.