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Bridgeport Generation Now is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that strengthens civic engagement in ourselves and our communities.

The year to see things clearly: Racism, Abuse of Power & The Corruption of Policing.

Today, we stand proudly with all Bridgeporters who have organized, rallied, protested, and marched over the past two weeks against police brutality and for racial justice, and civil and human rights.

The murder of George Floyd is making clear to white people what Black people have known for 400 years. That our lives have been under constant violent assault. And in the United States, it's legal. Racism, abuse of power, and the corruption of policing is the root cause of the violence in our country. And right here at home, in Bridgeport, too.

Racism and abuse of power gave Officer James Boulay license to kill Jayson Negron. The corruption of policing kept him out of jail and in his job. Racism and abuse of power called 40 officers to respond to a noise complaint on Colorado Ave where cops harassed, assaulted and arrested the home owner and her guests. Corruption of policing told 17 of them to lie about it. Racism and abuse of power allowed Officer Christina Arroyo to punch Aaron Kearny in the face. The corruption of policing kept her - and so many others like her - on the payroll. Racism and abuse of power gave a police officer the audacity to try and handcuff a 12 year old. Corruption of policing meant when his mother fought back, she was arrested and the charges were never dropped.

Racism and abuses of power are terrorizing Bridgeport residents. The corruption of policing has rigged it so our Police Commission has little to no power to discipline officers, let alone be an effective oversight body.

Since 2017, we at Bridgeport Generation Now have remained steadfast in our assessment that the Bridgeport Police Department is in crisis. There is a lack of leadership, no meaningful oversight and no accountability. We have gone before our City Council numerous times and been to every Police Commission meeting since Jayson Negron was killed - calling out police misconduct, poor leadership, and the disparity between the Police Department's ever growing budget and that of our schools. We have listened, researched, asked questions, formed community coalitions, advocated for victims of police violence, hosted forums, held press conferences, wrote op-eds and made demands.

We are in a state of emergency and it is the people who are demanding change. We at Gen Now know that means policy change - we must move our police department from racist policies to anti-racists policies. And to hold those with power accountable to dismantling racism, abuse, and corruption within this incredibly harmful system.

Bridgeport City Council's recent resolution proposal to ban knee and chokeholds, to pay all settlements for police use of excessive force and civil rights violations out of the Police Department's overtime budget, and to review of the function and structure of the Board of Police Commissioners is a great start - and we know Bridgeport can do more. The Bridgeport Police Union contract ends in 2021 and negotiations for a new contract begins this July.

So, we are ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work with our City Council to...

- Reallocate money away from the police department and into education, housing, and other community needs
- Reform our Police Union contract to address unchecked power, fire abusive officers and hold others truly accountable
- Reform our Policy Handbook to have zero tolerance for excessive force and other violent behaviors
- Demilitarize our police department
- Remove police from our schools
- Establish Anti-Racism training for all of BPD
- Organize real community forums
- Reform the Citizen Complaint process
- Retire Chair Daniel Roach from the Police Commission and return the commission to a true civilian review board