



Northeastern

February 25, 2016

VIA EMAIL

Councilor Andrea Campbell
1 City Hall Square, Suite 550
Boston, MA 02201-2043

Dear Councilor Campbell,

This letter is in response to the Public Hearing Notice issued by the Boston City Council's Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice regarding the Northeastern University Police Department's tactical weapons capability.

Councilors Josh Zakim and Tito Jackson have called for this public hearing based on claims that Northeastern decided to increase the tactical capabilities of its Incident Containment Team "without the collaboration and approval of BPD" and made "no effort to consult or involve" the local community. These statements are not accurate.

In my previous letter to the City Council, dated January 26, 2016 (also attached) I outlined Northeastern University's ongoing communications with the Boston Police Department around increasing the tactical capability of NUPD officers to protect university students and employees on our campus.

In my letter, and in subsequent meetings with the councilors, we have provided a detailed timeline of all communication between NUPD and BPD dating back to October of last year. The councilors' premise for calling a public hearing is nonexistent, and we consider the hearing scheduled for February 29 unnecessary.

Moreover, Northeastern University law enforcement leadership has had very productive conversations with both the Mayor and leadership of BPD around ongoing collaboration, including joint training. The strong partnership between our two organizations is built around the shared goal of keeping the communities within Boston safe. Together, we are focused on strengthening the collective capacity of local law enforcement to work together in the event of an active shooter incident on Northeastern's campus. Northeastern values the collective

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competencies of BPD and other area agencies, and is committed to fostering cooperation on critical public safety matters.

Additionally, the law enforcement personnel of many Boston-area higher education institutions have similar capabilities to protect their communities in active shooter situations. Yet, the proposed February 29 hearing focuses on only one institution: Northeastern. No other university has been invited to participate in the hearing, and none have been criticized for not participating in a community process. In fact, there is no process “to consult or involve” the local community because a tactical weapons capability is a necessarily discrete capability that should involve corresponding police departments and law enforcement agencies.

Despite there being no process to include community members in decisions involving a private institution’s inward-facing law enforcement capabilities, on February 17, law enforcement and community affairs leadership from Northeastern met with Councilors Zakim and Jackson to discuss the councilors’ concerns. Northeastern leaders have also met with representatives of the Black Ministerial Alliance and Ten Point Coalition. In every meeting, Northeastern representatives explained the purpose of NUPD’s Incident Containment Team and how its tactical weapons would only be deployed in response to a verified active shooter threat *on our campus*, and not in surrounding neighborhoods.

With these undisputed facts in mind, we ask you to include this correspondence and the January 26 letter into the record of the City Council, and we respectfully decline the invitation extended to members of the Northeastern University administration to appear at the February 29 hearing.

While Northeastern’s strong partnership with the Boston Police Department and other local agencies is integral to the safety of our campus, Northeastern University police officers are charged with the explicit responsibility of protecting the university’s 77-acre campus, and its students and employees. NUPD officers are members of an accredited department that is led by Chief Michael Davis, a national expert on urban policing, who has more than 20 years of experience as a municipal police officer and leader. Chief Davis is also a police-practicing expert who has consulted with the U.S. Department of Justice on a number of urban police matters.

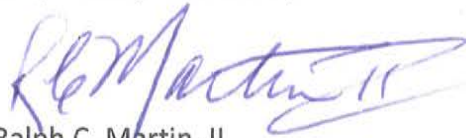
The authority of the NUPD officers resides under a state statute that enables them to serve as Special State Police Officers of the Massachusetts State Police. To fulfill their responsibilities, NUPD must equip and train its officers to handle

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the variety of emergency situations that might arise on a college campus,
including active shooter situations.

We will continue our collaborations with BPD and other area law enforcement
agencies, as well as with Mayor Walsh, around these and other important issues
affecting our great city.

Respectfully submitted,



Ralph C. Martin, II
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

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Northeastern

January 26, 2016

VIA EMAIL

Councilor Josh Zakim
Councilor Tito Jackson
1 City Hall Square, Suite 550
Boston, MA 02201-2043

Members of the Boston City Council:

In recent weeks, there has been confusion and misinformation spreading around the city regarding Northeastern's decision **to protect its campus from a possible active shooter situation**. In academic institutions, we pride ourselves on learning the facts before jumping to conclusions. In this spirit, I am writing to provide you with some helpful factual information:

The Northeastern University Police Department—a highly trained professional force—**has the sole responsibility for maintaining safety and security on Northeastern's 77-acre private campus**. The department is led by Chief Michael Davis, a national expert on urban policing, who has more than 20 years of experience as a municipal police officer. Chief Davis is also a police-practicing expert who has consulted with the Department of Justice on a number of urban police matters.

First, it is important to understand that tactical rifles **would only be deployed on the university campus**, not in surrounding neighborhoods.

It is also critical to appreciate that, unfortunately, **active shooter situations are on the rise across the country**. A national gun-safety group tracked 31 active shooter situations at college campuses just last year. FBI data suggests that **the vast majority of active shooter situations are over in less than 5 minutes, and a quarter are over in less than 2 minutes**.

Understandably, the actions taken by first responders within the first few minutes can help reduce fatalities and severe injuries. Proximity to these emergencies is key—Northeastern's officers are on campus and will always be the first responders. **Containing an active shooter incident requires special expertise and capability, which we have embedded in a select group of officers**. Because the Boston Police Commissioner has said his officers would be able to respond to an on campus emergency in "5 or 6 minutes," the Northeastern campus would be relegated to a "standing by" mode, hoping that help arrives in time. This is a vulnerability that is not acceptable to us given the size, complexity and breadth of our campus.

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More than 60 colleges and universities nationwide have similar incident containment teams, utilizing the same type of tactical weapons that Northeastern has acquired. Locally, Boston University, MIT and UMass Boston all have the same weapons available to their officers in the unlikely event of a worst-case scenario. We find it puzzling that some members of the city council have singled out Northeastern University.

Northeastern leaders regularly consult with Boston Police Department leadership on strategies and training opportunities. As an example, Northeastern was the first university to establish an MOU to share sexual assault investigative information with the Boston Police Department. Indeed, the decision to begin deploying tactical rifles was pursued with the same type of consultation. As the timeline below shows, **NUPD officials made the Boston Police aware of the plan in mid October, long before the issue became public.** In fact, in the first conversation with BPD's tactical unit commander, the weapons were discussed and shown with no objections expressed.

Our primary concern is the safety and security of our campus community. On this issue, we rightfully **put our trust in the highly trained professionals** who lead our university police department.

Sincerely,



Ralph C. Martin II
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

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Timeline of BPD Notification:

- **October 15, 11:38 a.m.** - NUPD Deputy Chief Ruben Galindo emails BPD Captain Crossen and schedules a meeting to update BPD on new initiatives at Northeastern.
- **October 21, 10:00 a.m.** - Meeting between Deputy Chief Galindo and Captain Crossen. BPD is briefed on the plans to implement tactical weapons, including the deployment strategy. NUPD and BPD also discuss joint training opportunities, and BPD is given a tour of NUPD's training facility and shown the proposed tactical rifle.
- **October 21, 10:43 a.m.** - NUPD Chief Michael Davis emails Commissioner Evans to schedule a meeting to discuss new initiatives and opportunities for collaboration. Meeting set for November 4 at 12:00 p.m.
- **October 28, 10:00 a.m.** - Deputy Chief Galindo attends a meeting at a BPD sub-station where Commissioner Evans shared crime statistics and upcoming strategies. Northeastern officials were informed at the end of the meeting that Commissioner Evans had just been made aware of NUPD's tactical weapons plan and that he appeared to be upset — despite the fact that the BPD was notified in October.
- **November 4, 12:00 p.m.** - Scheduled lunch takes place between Commissioner Evans, Chief Davis and Deputy Chief Galindo. Topics discussed included community policing, tactical weapons and deployment strategies, multi-target attacks and tasers.
- **December 8** – Commissioner Evans appears on WGBH radio and expresses concern about NUPD's tactical weapons plan, and argues that the plan is unnecessary. The official BPD media release states that BPD was not made aware of NUPD's tactical weapons initiative until it appeared in the press — again contrary to the fact that the BPD was notified by NUPD in October.