

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**

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March 28, 2019

Hon. Benjamin Boykin
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
Michaelian Office Building
White Plains, NY 10601

Dear BOL Chairman Benjamin Boykin,

I am writing to discuss a recent interaction between Legislator Damon Maher and Sgt. Amery Bernhardt, assigned to the Patrol Division, School Resource Officer Unit.

Chief Calabrese was contacted by a representative of the Board of Legislators with a request to appear before the New Rochelle school Culture and Climate Committee meeting on March 27th to discuss the role and training aspects of School Resource Officers in the schools. Chief Calabrese contacted New Rochelle Superintendent Hastie, who advised that this was an informational awareness for the school board and the public on how our SRO program and training is conducted.

Sgt. Amery Bernhardt was assigned to make the presentation at the meeting, appeared before the committee, gave his presentation, and then answered questions from members of the committee. During a public question portion of the meeting Westchester County Legislator Damon Maher proceeded to attack Sgt. Bernhardt's integrity, and make statements that indicate that Legislator Maher harbors an anti-law enforcement bias. At one point a committee member even interceded on behalf of Sgt. Bernhardt, reminding Legislator Maher that Sgt. Bernhardt was a guest, there to share his expertise involving school resource officers and not to be "grilled". Legislator Maher's comments that Sgt. Bernhardt was "disingenuous" about his knowledge of the demographics of school districts in Northern Westchester, about Police sharing information with ICE leading to the deportation of students, and his allegation that officers have implicit biases toward students, and treat them differently based on race, were inappropriate and completely uncalled for.

Legislator Maher's outrageous comments indicate his bias towards, and contempt for, the law-enforcement community. It is difficult for the members of the Westchester County Police PBA to see how Legislator Maher can be an impartial and effective member of the Public Safety Committee given this bias, and as such, we request that you reconsider his assignment to this committee. I look forward to further discussing this matter with you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Hagan', written over a white background.

Michael Hagan
PBA President