

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
NO. 3-21-84

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL NO. 2656/ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 5301
THAT REQUIRES ACCESS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT DISCIPLINARY
RECORDS AS GOVERNMENT RECORDS

RESOLUTION: Council as a Whole

WHEREAS, access to government records promotes general transparency in government, and can expose significant failings and provide insight into what can be done to effectuate meaningful change, which is especially critical in the context of police disciplinary records; and

WHEREAS, shielding police disciplinary records from the public is one action that significantly reduces trust in law enforcement and causes the community to believe that misconduct is being swept under the rug; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey lags far behind other states when it comes to transparency in the police internal affairs process and police disciplinary records, including states such as Florida, Colorado, Alabama, and New York; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 2656/Assembly Bill No. 5301 would make law enforcement disciplinary records accessible as government records under the New Jersey Open Public Records Act; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 2656/Assembly Bill No. 5301 provides that certain information pertaining to the law enforcement officer, or the officer's family, the complainant, or the complainant's family, and a witness, or the witness' family, will be redacted to sufficiently protect those individuals while providing transparency; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 2656/Assembly Bill No. 5301 provides that law enforcement disciplinary records include, but are not limited to: complaints, allegations, and charges; the name of the officer complained of or charged; the transcript of any disciplinary trial or hearing, including any exhibits; the disposition of any proceeding; and the final written opinion or memorandum supporting the disposition and discipline imposed including the agency's complete factual findings and its analysis of the conduct and appropriate discipline of the covered officer; and internal affairs records; and videos that record incidents that gave rise to complaints, allegations, charges, or internal affairs investigations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Borough Council wish to urge State lawmakers to adopt legislation that would require access to law enforcement disciplinary records as government records, and that such records be retained for a certain period of time.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT:

1. The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park hereby urge 18th District Senator Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. to support and co-sponsor Senate Bill No. 2656.

- 2. The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park hereby urge 18th District Assembly Members Sterley Stanley and Robert Karabinchak to support and co-sponsor Assembly Bill No. 5301.
- 3. A certified true copy of this Resolution, upon its adoption, shall be furnished to 18th District Assembly Members Sterley Stanley and Robert Karabinchak, and State Senator Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr.
- 4. A certified true copy of this Resolution, upon its adoption, shall also be furnished to the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

ADOPTED: March 2, 2021

ATTEST:

Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk

I, Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Highland Park, New Jersey, do hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of said Borough on the 2nd day of March, 2021.

Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk

RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTES

Council Member	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Canavera				
Foster				
George				
Hale				
Hersh				
Kim-Chohan				