



**Attorney General
Justice
Office of the Minister**

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MAY 31 2019

Dear members of the African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent Coalition,

Thank you for your open letter of April 10. The injustices experienced by African Nova Scotians in our province must and are being addressed.

Any police activity that is racially discriminatory or biased has no place in our society. All Nova Scotians deserve respect and equal treatment. It is clear from the powerful stories from the African Nova Scotian community and from the research and data compiled and analyzed by Prof. Scot Wortley, that African Nova Scotians are disproportionately targeted by street checks.

As I have stated publicly, the inappropriate use of street checks is unacceptable. The status quo is not an option.

Over the last number of weeks, I have met with individual members of the community and I have had my staff review the *Police Act* and other statutes to determine any additional actions that can be taken immediately to address street checks. Dr. Wortley asked that we “consider” a moratorium. We considered it and we acted.

On April 17, I directed all municipal police services and the RCMP to suspend the use of street checks until further notice. The moratorium applies to pedestrians, passengers in motor vehicles and citizens in places accessible to the public. Police will continue to have authority to ensure compliance of the *Motor Vehicle Act* and the Criminal Code; but the directive also makes it clear that no traffic stop or street check can be based on race or discrimination.

I am hopeful that the Wortley Report Working Group, of which the African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent has representation, will continue its work on advising government as we head toward strict regulation, on an action plan to effectively respond to the recommendations of the Wortley Report.

As you know, I also directed police and the RCMP to immediately cease using street checks as a quota system and for performance evaluations, which were noted in the Wortley report. The department is also investing in mandatory training for all front-line officers across the province and to also familiarize themselves with the Wortley Report.

I also want you to know that we acknowledge the Coalition’s other areas of concern that you raise in your letter. Many are areas of priority for the government. Our goal is to reduce the over representation of African Nova Scotians in our criminal justice system and to enhance support for those who are.

In closing, I want to again thank you for your letter and ANSDPAD's commitment to work with government and the department in the creation of a collaborative action plan.

Yours truly,



Mark Furey