Commission on Racial Equity and Justice
Listening Session #1: Community Conversation

Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau, Host
July 20, 2020

Held virtually via Zoom

Participants

This listening session, hosted by Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau, was with community leaders from the Wichita area, including religious, educational, business, and nonprofit leaders.

Topics Discussed

*How have you and your community been impacted by racial inequity, particularly around policing and law enforcement?*

*What steps should the state of Kansas take to address racial inequity and injustice, particularly around policing and law enforcement?*

Primary themes were increasing transparency and accountability within law enforcement; improving relationships between the police and the community; and working to offer mental health response instead of or alongside officers when dispatched. Other items discussed:

- Unnecessarily punitive traffic citations – cause people to get caught in a cycle of owing fines/fees they can’t pay, further punishments
- Increase diversity within law enforcement agencies
- Sensitivity and implicit bias training
- Black communities aren’t being listened to, always last in line when there are needs.
- Transparency within policing; statewide reporting/database for excessive use of force information; KORA exemptions related to excessive force
- Body cameras and policies that ensure they are recording at the appropriate time
- No knock warrants – dangerous for both citizens and officers
- Mental health funding and dispatching mental health professionals on 911 calls
- Qualified immunity
- Evictions and homeownership
- Education and internet access
- Police-community relationships and lack of consequences for bad behavior
- Economic development
- Fear between the community and police
- Drivers license suspensions
- Importance of preventing gang violence
- Civil asset forfeiture
- Racial profiling
- Citizens review board and powers
- Interaction between various law enforcement agencies and information for the public on the jurisdictions
- Fathering classes and resources for single fathers
- Use of force policy on state and city level
- Training for officers and discipline/penalties for bad behavior
- Decriminalization of marijuana
- Post-incarceration voting rights
- Remove the slavery exception in the 13th amendment for punishment for a crime
- Funding of public defenders
- School resource officers