



To the Human Relations Commission:

Thank you for taking the time to meet a few weeks ago. Our congregation is appreciative of your support in the aftermath of the shooting in Pittsburgh, the increased anti-Semitism in Durham, and the partnership in our immigrant justice work, particularly with our friend Samuel Oliver-Bruno. These are important issues that we can address together, and your partnership means a great deal to our community.

The purpose of this letter is to express our thanks to you and your colleagues for your very thorough and thoughtful report on the impact of the April 16 City Council statement regarding police training in Durham. While it is impossible to speak to everyone, it is clear that you took the time to listen to many different voices in our community. The recommendations submitted to the HRC address the major concerns of many members of our community while maintaining the important message of de-militarizing our police force, here in Durham. We stand with that message and our fellow community members in support of a better place to live for all citizens of Durham.

It is our hope that the full HRC, and subsequently the City Council, will adopt the recommendations of your subcommittee as submitted, especially the rewrite of the Council Statement that omits the unnecessary and disruptive reference to the State of Israel. These recommendations go a long way to correcting misinformation and the pain felt by many in the Jewish community.

From the beginning, our leadership has supported the intent of the April 16 statement to de-militarize the Durham Police Department. The prevailing concern has been disappointment at the inclusion of the word "Israel". We therefore support your recommendation to remove "Israel" from the statement and to include footnotes of the full statements that describe the history of how and why the statement was crafted.

As proud partners in this city, Judea Reform Congregation commits to work with the HRC, and the City Council toward what is best for the City of Durham and all of its people...as your report states "to continue inter-faith, inter-racial dialogues and partnerships on an on-going basis to further understanding, deepen relationships, and together seek changes to oppressive systems existing in our city."

In partnership,

Ziva Raney
President

Rabbi John Franken
Rabbi (Interim)

Board of Trustees