



February 6, 2012

President and City Council  
City of Spokane

**RE: Council Resolution RES-2012-0017 – Reform of the Police Department**

By way of introduction my name is Ron Wright. I am a retired police detective from Southern California having served almost thirty-five years. I chose to relocate to Spokane for its many fine attributes. I was a two-term president of a large police union. I have taught criminal justice including community oriented policing, controversial issues in law enforcement and forensics and crime scene investigations at the college level. I have a master of public administration from the Univ of Cal, Riverside and a political science degree from Cal State Univ. Fullerton.

I have followed some of these local problematic officer involved shootings/deaths (OIS/OID) from both my academic interest and also for clients that have not been satisfied with the actions of local law enforcement. In my opinion there are indeed issues with the police rank and file however the real problem lies with inept, incompetent and or corrupt police leaders that have failed to take action.

The job of a police officer is very difficult indeed requiring split second decisions. Inevitably mistakes will be made, as police officers are only human. In Spokane there is a pattern of covering up mistakes to minimize public liability. Elected leaders have buried their heads in the sand and or were so shaking in their boots of what the Guild might politically do also failed to act. The Spokane Police Guild circled the wagons, “them vs. us [citizens].” It would have been cheaper in the long run to we the taxpayers to simply acknowledge and to apologize when mistakes were made, learn from them, take action to ensure that they don’t happen again.

I recently wrote Mayor Condon with my recommendations of how to bring about real change quickly within the SPD (attached). I have expanded upon those recommendations and they are attached.

***In the end the community and the police must trust each other - we are the police and the police are us.***

**We are a nation of laws and no one even the police SHOULD BE ABOVE THE LAW.**

Sincerely,

Ron Wright