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To: [Finance Committee](#)
Cc: [Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina](#)
Subject: No to special MPD grant-acceptance privilege (91026)
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Dear Finance Committee,

On your agenda this week, MPD is seeking authority to accept training grants without Council approval. I oppose this, as a power grab and an evasion of transparency and accountability.

Your agenda also includes other departments, seeking itemized approval to apply for and/or accept specific grants for specific purposes. I've reviewed these, and registered in support of a couple that I particularly endorse.

If MPD training grants were on the agenda, I would likewise look through those. And in fact, I might see value in them and register my support for those too, and this is something I have done before. But with this resolution, MPD is saying that my voice in the matter is worthless, and that yours is too.

With passage of this resolution, there will no longer be public hearings on additional funds flowing into MPD, nor on topics that officers are being trained on. They would be free to accept funds from sources that the city may find problematic. They would be empowered to conduct trainings on topics that may be counterproductive to public safety.

I can easily see this privilege being used politically, to strong-arm the Council into approving policies that they otherwise might not. For example:

Let's say MPD just happens to receive a grant from a body cam manufacturer to train the entire department on body cams. That would then allow MPD to make a stronger case for body cams to the council, because training costs have been covered and officers are even trained on them already.

No other city department is seeking perpetual, unilateral authority to accept grants. For MPD, being the largest city department still isn't enough. MPD sees itself as a special case, and seems to resent the budgeting and oversight that city departments are subject to.

If you find yourself inclined to approve this resolution, I urge you to ask yourself: why should only MPD have this privilege? Why not let all city departments accept grants without Council approval? In that case, the Finance Committee could have shorter agendas, perhaps less frequent meetings, or could even stop meeting altogether.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
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