From: Amy Owen
To: Body-Worn Camera Feasibility Review Committee
Subject: Request to not body-worn cameras for law enforcement
Date: Wednesday, December 23, 2020 11:48:19 AM

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Dear Committee,
I am writing to request that you choose not to recommend the use of body-worn cameras for Madison police. Our city budget could really use the money that is necessary to fund a body-worn camera pilot for other severely urgent needs this year. Research in this area and experiences from other cities have shown that footage is sometimes used to add charges for people who might otherwise not be charged, that racial disparities in criminal justice increased rather than decreased, that officers did not always have their cameras on when required to, that victims may not have control over footage of vulnerable and traumatic moments, and other concerns that our city does not need. As a recent violent crime victim, knowing that I would be recorded would have made me even more hesitant to call the police for help in that moment than I already was. Trust that help will be given in moments like this is already strained, especially among residents of color, and I do not think body-worn cam
eras wil
l help to rebuild that trust. Our city needs solid leadership within the police ranks and officers we can count on, not video monitoring of officers to ensure the performance of their job meets expected standards. While we all urgently hunger for an unbiased documentation of the details of events when something severe and tragic happens, capturing the moment does not mean that the public or oversight bodies ever get to view that footage, or that if they do, this results in real justice or accountability if avoidable mistakes or brutality occurred. Please choose not to add body-worn cameras to officers in this city.
Thank you,
Amy Owen
3129 Buena Vista Street
Madison, WI 53704