



## Urban Alliance On Race Relations

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Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Toronto City Council,

On behalf of the Urban Alliance on Race Relations (UARR), we are writing to express serious concerns regarding the City's proposed Demonstrations Bylaw and the flawed public survey process currently underway.

While the stated intent of the bylaw is to protect "vulnerable institutions," we are deeply concerned that its true impact and risks are in criminalizing and suppressing legitimate protest, while enabling disinformation and misinformation that influences bias, bigotry, and hate. Additionally, the survey frames protests and demonstrations as disruptive behaviour rather than a fundamental Canadian right. This is especially concerning for movements advocating for racial justice, Indigenous sovereignty, Palestinian human rights, workers' rights, educators' rights, and students' right to political expression.

This consultation process raises several red flags for us:

**Biased framing and methodology:** The survey's vague and subjective questions about "feelings of safety" are deeply problematic. Without clear definitions, this framing enables the dismissal or suppression of well-documented political criticisms under the pretense that they may cause discomfort, opening the door to policy-making based on bias rather than principle.

**Unequal application of scrutiny:** We cannot ignore the stark contrast that no comparable consultation or bylaw process was initiated in response to the occupation of Toronto streets by the "Freedom Convoy," despite its well-documented threats to public health and safety. The selective nature of this process raises urgent concerns about anti-Palestinian racism and discriminatory enforcement.

**Failure to engage affected communities:** The groups most impacted are racialized communities, political activists, human rights advocates, labour unions, educators, and students, who have been excluded from shaping this process. A meaningful consultation cannot take place without centering their voices.

We urge the City to immediately suspend this flawed survey and replace it with a transparent, community-led process that upholds Canadian's fundamental rights to protest, assembly, and political expression, particularly in marginalized and racialized communities, as well as those advocating for labour rights, academic freedom, and student activism. Any proposed bylaw to regulate demonstrations must be scrutinized and grounded in equity, civil liberties, and anti-racism principles.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is committed to defending the democratic rights of all residents, and we call on you to do the same.

Sincerely,

**Urban Alliance on Race Relations Board of Directors**