
Letter of Support for NCPE from New Brunswick Resident1 message

Sem Ponnambalam <sem.ponnambalam@gmail.com>

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To: Mike Federico <

Cc: Thoms Mbock <

Chief Mike Federico, President
Coalition for Canadian Police Excellence

Former Chief Dave Cassels, Former President
Coalition for Canadian Police Excellence

Dr. John Lilley, Treasurer
Coalition for Canadian Police Excellence, and former member of
the Edmonton Police Commission

Dear Chief Federico, Former Chief Cassels, and Dr. Lilley,

My name is Thomas Mbock, and I am a Black Canadian of Cameroonian background living in New Brunswick. I am writing to express my support for the National Coalition for Police Excellence (NCPE) and its efforts to strengthen policing through education, professionalism, and meaningful engagement with the communities police serve.

I learned about this initiative through conversations with Sem Ponnambalam, Senior Director of Policy at the Coalition for Canadian Police Excellence. Her outreach encouraged me to reflect on what this initiative could mean for Black communities in New Brunswick and across Canada.

New Brunswick is home to a relatively small but steadily growing Black population. According to the 2021 Census, just over 12,000 Black residents live in the province, making Black Canadians the largest visible minority group in New Brunswick, despite representing only a small percentage of the overall population.

Across Canada, more than 9.6 million people identify as members of racialized communities. The Cameroonian community is also growing, with many individuals and families choosing Canada as their home. We contribute as students, professionals, entrepreneurs, parents, and community volunteers, and like all Canadians, we seek safety, fairness, and equal opportunities to thrive.

While significant progress has been made in many areas, research and public reports continue to highlight disparities in how some racialized communities, including Black Canadians, experience the criminal justice system. Statistics Canada and other public institutions have documented that Black Canadians are

overrepresented in certain stages of the justice system, including police interactions, criminal charges, and incarceration, relative to their proportion of the population. These findings have led many researchers, policymakers, and community leaders to call for continued efforts to strengthen trust, fairness, and accountability within policing.

In New Brunswick, where the Black community remains relatively small, these concerns can have a significant impact. Experiences, whether personal or shared within families and community networks, often shape perceptions of policing. When people feel that interactions with law enforcement are not always fair or respectful, confidence in public institutions can be weakened. Through conversations with friends, neighbours, and members of my community, I have heard concerns about these issues and about the experiences future generations may face as they grow up in Canada.

For this reason, I believe education should be one of the central pillars of the NCPE. Policies and standards are essential, but lasting change also depends on equipping officers with the knowledge, skills, and cultural understanding needed to serve increasingly diverse communities.

Comprehensive and ongoing education in areas such as anti-Black racism, Indigenous histories, cultural awareness, implicit bias, communication, and de-escalation can help officers better understand the lived experiences of the communities they serve. Equally important is creating opportunities for officers to engage directly with community members so that learning is informed by real experiences as well as evidence-based research.

In my view, the NCPE is well positioned to promote this vision by encouraging:

- Continuous education throughout an officer's career, from recruit training to ongoing professional development;
- Training informed by community perspectives alongside evidence-based policing practices;
- Greater use of research and data to better understand disparities and identify effective approaches;
- Collaboration among police services across Canada to share successful educational initiatives and best practices.

Investing in education benefits both police officers and the communities they serve. For Black Canadians, including those of Cameroonian background, it has the potential to foster more positive interactions, strengthen mutual understanding, reduce unnecessary conflict, and build greater confidence in policing. As a national initiative, the NCPE can also help promote more consistent standards and learning opportunities across provinces, benefiting communities throughout the country.

After learning about the NCPE through Sem Ponnambalam and reflecting on both the research and the conversations I have had within my community, I believe this initiative represents a meaningful opportunity to strengthen relationships between police services and the diverse communities they serve.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to advancing excellence in Canadian policing. I respectfully offer this letter as my personal endorsement of the NCPE and my encouragement for the important work that lies ahead.

Sincerely,

Thomas Mbock