



An Open Letter to Occupy Oakland from the Oakland Police Officers' Association

November 11, 2011

On behalf of the 645 Oakland police officers we represent, this letter comes to you out of duty to protect the Oakland community and its citizens.

Oakland police officers are the 99% and we understand and sympathize with your message. We respect your right to peaceful protest.

We are also sworn to protect the citizens of Oakland. Right now, Oakland is in a state of emergency.

Our police officers are the 99% struggling in Oakland neighborhoods every day to contain the 1% who rob, steal, rape and murder our law-abiding citizens. The Occupy Oakland protest, now 30 days old, is taking our police officers out of Oakland neighborhoods and away from protecting the citizens of Oakland.

In an average city in California, this might not be of emergency proportions for its citizens. Oakland is not an "average" city – we have the highest violent crime rate in California. We are the 5th most violent city in the United States – with more shootings and homicides than any city west of the Mississippi.

Last night's murder, right in the epicenter of Occupy Oakland, is unacceptable. So is the violence being promoted by "renegade" protesters who are lighting firebombs, destroying property and attacking police.

What is even more tragic is that homicides are a frequent occurrence in Oakland. This is the real emergency: Yesterday's murder was Oakland's 101st homicide of 2011. It is time for us to stop directing all of our efforts at policing the small enclave of "Occupy Oakland" and get back to our job of protecting the citizens of Oakland in the neighborhoods where our residents live.

The events of recent weeks have shown that many occupiers at Frank Ogawa Plaza are citizens of other communities with limited interest in preserving the greater good and safety of our City.

Please, we ask you: Leave Frank Ogawa Plaza peacefully and immediately so Oakland Police can get back to work fighting the devastating crime that's occurring in our neighborhoods.

You have sent the world a strong message; now it is time to go home. Your leaving today, peacefully, of your own free will, on the 30th day, will send a message to Oakland that you care about our citizens and respect our city.

With last night's homicide, in broad daylight, in the middle of rush hour, Frank Ogawa Plaza is no longer safe. Please leave peacefully, with your heads held high, so we can get police officers back to work fighting crime in Oakland neighborhoods.

Thank you.