

December 8, 1999

**FERRER WELCOMES CCRB TO THE BRONX  
Bronx Representative Still Awaits City Hall's Appointment  
Lauds Progress On Pepper Spray**

Borough President Fernando Ferrer today welcomed the Civilian Complaint Review Board to the Bronx with a ten-point plan to strengthen the CCRB and re-engineer the police oversight agency as a fully independent police monitor. Ferrer also questioned City Hall's delay in appointing Ms. Lorraine A. Cortes-Vasquez to fill the Bronx vacancy on the Board. Ferrer reported that the CCRB's Pepper Spray Committee, re-convened at his request, meets next week.

Ferrer, an ardent advocate of a strengthened CCRB, proposes:

- 1) Establish the CCRB as a fully independent agency with each appointment subject to Council confirmation;
- 2) Set Budget for CCRB as a percent of the NYPD budget;
- 3) Maintain CCRB subpoena power;
- 4) Empower the CCRB to prosecute its substantiations;
- 5) Require investigations completed within six months as follows: CCRB investigations and recommendation within 120 days, OATH decision within 30 days of receipt from CCRB; Police Commissioner action within 30 days of receipt OATH;
- 6) Report data in MMR concerning complaint intakes, length of investigations and investigation results;
- 7) Require CCRB to study and recommend on practices of the NYPD that impact members of the public; this includes tracking systemic patterns of abuse;
- 8) Holding the NYPD, its units, commanders and commissioners

accountable for their actions and non-actions;

- 9) Conduct oversight to ensure that the NYPD appropriately trains and supervises its police officers; and
- 10) Conduct periodic CCRB reviews of NYPD operations.

“The re-convened Pepper Spray panel follows the shooting of Gary Busch in Borough Park and its use by police officers prior to the shooting,” said Ferrer. “In September, I asked that the CCRB, which had studied the use of pepper spray and issued its own recommendations, to look at the use of pepper spray in this incident. In light of the fact that the CCRB had recommended in 1997 that the NYPD discontinue its use of pepper spray on emotionally disturbed persons, why hasn’t the NYPD adopted this reform?”

Ferrer supports the pending appointment of Cortes-Vasquez, President of the Hispanic Federation of New York, to the CCRB. Ferrer noted the failure to fill this vacancy has left the borough without a voice on the Board in the wake of the shooting of Amadou Diallo and continued higher volume of complaints against police. “The CCRB noted the failure to fill the vacancy at its first meeting, September 8, following the City Council’s August 11 vote to designate Ms. Cortes-Vasquez.

“Leaving the CCRB without any vacancies, coupled with my proposals, can ensure further independence of civilian oversight of the NYPD. Moreover, it would help improve things for the vast majority of decent men and women in the NYPD who do their job every day with respect for the citizens of this city and their rights.”

Local Law 1 of 1993 created an Independent CCRB of 13 members appointed by the Mayor: five designated by the Council (one from each borough), three having law enforcement experience (including former NYPD members) designated by the Police Commissioner, and five chosen by the Mayor. The Mayor chooses the chairperson. Board members are elected for three-year terms.