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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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No one to benefit from Bureau's disciplinary decisions on Aaron Campbell incident

PORTLAND, OR -- November 16, 2010 -- The 930 members of the Portland Police Association will now have to come to the realization that Mayor Sam Adams and Police Chief Mike Reese have ignored the truth and the facts regarding the Aaron Campbell incident. They have decided to terminate Officer Ron Frashour's employment with the Portland Police Bureau, and to discipline Officer Ryan Lewton, Sergeant Liani Reyna and Sergeant John Birkinbine, even though the facts prove that the officers and sergeants did nothing wrong and performed their jobs correctly on the evening of January 29, 2010.

We have been concerned from the beginning that the intent of this investigation was to use Ron Frashour, Ryan Lewton, Liani Reyna and John Birkinbine as scapegoats to minimize the City's and the Police Bureau's political and civil liability. The decision to sacrifice these officers' careers and reputations was made even before the facts were presented to the Grand Jury, and long before all the evidence was in.

The Police Commissioner and the Police Chief ignored the fact that the Training Division's investigation was incomplete and inadequate, and that the lead instructors of Patrol Tactics, Defensive Tactics and Firearms, as well as other Training Division staff, were not involved in the investigation. They ignored the fact that training instructors who have trained hundreds of police officers over the past decade were not allowed to critique the incident. The input of these training instructors and staff was not only unwanted, but expressly disallowed, and they were ordered by their lieutenant not to discuss the contents of the critique with anyone outside of the Training Division. Mayor Adams and Chief Reese seem not to care that the Training Division's critique of the incident left out vital information regarding the mind-set of Aaron Campbell and failed to address violations of the Portland Police Bureau's policies by on-scene command staff.

Mayor Adams and Chief Reese have also ignored the fact that the Bureau has no written policy regarding how officer-involved shootings are investigated. They ignored the fact that several lead instructors firmly believe that Ron Frashour and Ryan Lewton were within the policy of the Portland Police Bureau when they used lethal force and less than lethal force. They ignored the statements of three officers other than Officer Frashour who said that they too believed Aaron Campbell was armed with a gun and was not only suicidal but wanted to commit "suicide by police." They even ignored the statements of four other witness officers and two independent civilian witnesses who said that they believed that Aaron Campbell was reaching into his back waistband for a weapon as he ran towards hard cover.

And finally, they even ignored a Multnomah County Grand Jury that not only said that Officer Frashour's use of deadly force was justified, but that they believed Officer Frashour to be honest and truthful while testifying in front of them when he said that he believed Aaron Campbell was armed with a handgun, suicidal, homicidal, intent on committing "suicide by police," and was an imminent threat.

Today we can say that the rank and file of the Portland Police Bureau have lost faith in their leaders. Disciplinary decisions cannot and should not be made for reasons of political expediency. No one – not the community, not the City, not the Police Bureau, and not even Mayor Adams and Chief Reese – will ultimately benefit from the imposition of baseless disciplinary action.

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