



Good Afternoon City Council Members,

My name is Andrea Young, and I am the Executive Director of the ACLU of Georgia. I am here today to urge the immediate approval of the full contract awarded to the Policing Alternatives and Diversion (PAD) program.

In October of 2022, the ACLU of Georgia released a report ["There are Better Solutions."](#) The report was our analysis of people detained at Fulton County Jail (many of whom are City of Atlanta residents). While initially, our goal was to show that leasing beds from the Atlanta City Detention Center was not the answer to overcrowding issues, we were able to provide four evidenced-based solutions that would help to alleviate the massive human costs of the overcrowding and safety concerns regarding plaguing City of Atlanta and Fulton County residents:

- unaffordable bail
- delayed indictments
- underutilization of pre arrest diversion

One of those solutions we presented was to increase utilization of the Policing Alternatives and Diversion Initiative (PAD) program. We found that a significant number of people could have been diverted and receive services as opposed to languishing in the Fulton County Jail. Although that report was two years ago we still unequivocally support the expansion of PAD,

We also conducted a poll that found that Atlanta voters agree that people with substance abuse issues and/or homelessness need treatment, rather than jail

PAD has proven to be a lifeline for City of Atlanta residents. In order to truly fulfill its ideals as the city that is too busy to hate, we must make sure we are in service to all Atlanta residents. Residents like Renfroe, who in 2021, Renfroe became homeless after facing challenges with his health, family, and career. After being diverted to PAD in March 2022 he ultimately secured his own home in April 2024. Renfroe is just one of many people that PAD has served.

I urge you to move forward with the contract that was awarded and not just stop gap measures so that PAD can continue to provide the critical services to our community.

Thank you.