



City of Wilmington

Wilmington City Council

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November 13, 2015

Nancy Jean Dubuc
President and Chief Executive Officer
A+E Networks
235 E 45th Street
New York, NY 10017

Paul Lee, President, ABC Entertainment Group
Channing Dungey, Vice President for Drama Development, ABC Entertainment Group
ABC Television
77 W 66th St #13,
New York, NY 10023

Dear Ms. Dubuc, Mr. Lee and Ms. Dungey:

We, the members of the Wilmington City Council in Wilmington, Delaware, ask you to please reconsider your reported decision (Variety, November 10, 2015) to produce and air a program entitled "Murder Town" that uses our home of Wilmington, Delaware as its setting. We are eager to travel to New York City if necessary to meet with you to discuss our concerns about the possible exploitation, intentionally or unintentionally, of our city's current predicament.

Wilmington is a mid-sized, urban municipality that is approximately 17 square-miles and home to 71,000 people that is struggling mightily with incidences of violent crime within certain sections of our City. Other areas of our City have lower to non-existent incidences of crime, yet our entire city is about to be painted once again with one broad brush as a "murder town." Cities with larger physical footprints, such as Baltimore with "The Wire" and New York with "Law and Order", are able to withstand a national presentation that directly associates these cities with negative behaviors and actions. Wilmington is a smaller city with no room for error on the reputation scale—either real or perceived.

We are deeply concerned about our crime problem and are taking steps to mitigate it. We know it is our responsibility to fix what ails the people and neighborhoods where violent crime

is occurring. We are not at all proud that our city has been the subject of a national magazine story and now, possibly a national television show and we are not blaming the media or your networks for our problems. At the same time, we don't feel that we are running away from our crime problem by asking you to reconsider the decision to set this story line in our City. We understand the nature of the television business which offers writers and producer's innumerable story lines and setting options to create programs that are both a critical and ratings success.

As television professionals, you know that this particular show will succeed or fail, not because it is set in Wilmington, Delaware, but because of the quality of the writing, acting and production. If that is the case, why add to the stigma we are trying to overcome in Wilmington, why decrease our prospects of future job growth or business development, and why negate the progress we have made in recent years to promote our city by setting a program of this nature in Wilmington, when you could just as easily set it anywhere, real or fictional?

We are asking ourselves these questions today because our city needs to be supported, not degraded. We hope our strong objection causes you to stop and reflect on the possible consequences of your decisions for our home city. Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss these matters further.

Sincerely,



Theopalis Gregory
President, Wilmington City Council



Loretta Walsh
At-Large Member, Wilmington City Council



Hanifa Shabazz
4th District, Wilmington City Council



Michael A. Brown, Sr
At Large Member, Wilmington City Council



Charles "Bud" Freel
8th District, Wilmington City Council



Samuel Prado
5th District, Wilmington City Council



Nnamdi Chukwuocha
1st District, Wilmington City Council



Trippi Congo
2nd District, Wilmington City Council



Darius Brown
3rd District, Wilmington City Council



Sherry Dorsey Walker
6th District, Wilmington City Council



Robert Williams
7th District, Wilmington City Council



Justen Wright
At Large Member, Wilmington City Council



Maria Cabrera
At Large Member, Wilmington City Council