

NYPD stop-and-frisk report downplays racial disparities, court papers say

BY VICTORIA BEKIEMPIS | June 7, 2017



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A recent report on stop-and-frisk downplayed racial disparities in the NYPD’s execution of the controversial practice, a new court filing claims.

An analysis filed by a court-appointed NYPD monitor on May 30 determined stops had dropped dramatically in recent years — but that racial disparities persist with regard to who’s stopped.

The federal monitor, Peter Zimroth, wrote in his report that stops had plummeted from 191,851 in 2013 to 22,563 in 2015.

The report showed percent-based racial breakdown of stops — which shows minorities are disproportionately impacted — “remained largely the same,” however.

African-Americans and Hispanics comprised some 53% and 29% of stops every year, respectively.

Whites made up approximately 11% of annual stops, the analysis found.

Zimroth — who was selected as a monitor after retired Manhattan Federal Judge Shira Scheindlin found in 2013 that the NYPD’s practice violated the rights of African-Americans and Hispanics — did not feel the new data necessarily indicate unconstitutional stops.

“These facts do not themselves establish impermissible racial disparities because they do not speak to whether there were factors other than race that might have affected the numbers,” Zimroth’s report stated.

Center for Constitutional Rights, one of the civil rights organizations that sued over the practice, argued in a June 7 letter to the court that Zimroth’s report misrepresents the meaning of racial disparities.

“While it is true that overall stops have decreased, the same disparities between stops and frisks of Black and Latino New Yorkers and Whites remain, even after controlling for higher crime rates in certain parts of the city,” said Darius Charney, Center for Constitutional Rights senior staff attorney, in a statement.

“Decreasing the overall number of stops is an important step in the right direction, but the unconstitutional elements of the NYPD’s stop-and-frisk practices will not be remedied until Blacks and Latinos are no longer targeted for stops because of their race, which the data indicate is still happening.”

Asked about Center for Constitutional Rights’ concerns, Zimroth said to refer to the report.

The NYPD deferred inquiries to the city Law Department, which did not immediately comment.