

**Media Contact:** Samiha Hassan

(305) 766-5920, [Samiha@MiketerMaat2022.com](mailto:Samiha@MiketerMaat2022.com), [www.MiketerMaat2022.com](http://www.MiketerMaat2022.com)

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## South Florida Police Officer Mike ter Maat for Congress

# A Fresh Approach to Justice

### 5-Point Plan for Justice Reform

**Hollywood, Florida** – [Mike ter Maat](#), a South Florida police officer and candidate in the special Congressional election in Florida District 20, has announced his 5-point plan for justice reform “**A Fresh Approach to Justice.**”

#### **Poverty Is a Political Phenomenon**

This plan is built on the understanding that persistent inter-generational poverty is not what would be predicted by free markets. It is the result of bad public policy, including the **War on Drugs, War on Poverty** and **1994 Crime Bill** that perpetuate the cycle of an oppressive justice system, poverty, and crime.

1. Modernize Officer Accountability & Transparency. **Defunding** police is not a serious proposal. Indeed, according to ter Maat, “Given our communities’ need for safety and the modernized demands we want to place on officers, law enforcement agencies yield the best return on investment in government.”
  - Require the use of body-worn cameras
  - Require availability of certain personnel data among hiring agencies
  - Change use of force guidelines & prohibit certain actions in public protests
  - Preclude qualified immunity for government agencies; indemnify officers
  - Create a duty to report & duty to intervene
  - Outlaw asset forfeiture
2. Reduce Community Criminalization. An eleven-year patrol officer in South Florida, ter Maat said, “The War on Drugs and the Crime Bill have resulted in the world’s highest incarceration rates without solutions to either addiction or violence.”
  - Decriminalize so-called “victimless crime” like simple possession
  - Modernize the world’s-longest prison sentencing
3. Enhance Officer Labor Markets. A former entrepreneur, ter Maat said “Reform efforts are undermined in states without police labor markets akin to those in any other

industry” because officers are practically handcuffed to a single agency for an entire career.

- Make pensions portable and hiring reciprocal
  - Make both discipline & incentivization more flexible
4. Enhance Community Leadership. Not all solutions are legislative. A former strategic consultant, ter Maat points out “Community leadership must be a part of the modernization of police management.”
- Community leaders must participate in officer training and hiring
  - Politicians must set agency performance objectives
5. Reduce Pressures That Lead to Crime. A former economics professor, ter Maat has said “We must break the cycle of an oppressive justice system, inter-generational poverty, and crime by recognizing that the 1960s **War on Poverty** has failed.”
- End local school monopolization of funding
  - End urban pro-density zoning & housing subsidies

### **Florida’s 20<sup>th</sup> Congressional District**

This highly diverse constituency is 53% Black, 24% Hispanic, 16% non-Hispanic white, 3% Asian; 99% urban, 1% rural; and had a 2019 median household income of \$49,200 compared to the national median of \$68,700. The 2017 Cook Political Report ranks this the 23<sup>rd</sup> most Democratic out of 435 districts nationally, with recent presidential votes 31 percentage points more Democratic than the national average.

### **Mike ter Maat**

Mike ter Maat (ter-MAHT, with a small ‘t’) has been a police officer in South Florida for eleven years. Mike recently has been featured discussing police reform in online programming with Larry Sharpe (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73SgkuCHwmY>) and Spike Cohen (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N1T9LouWal&t=728s>).

Previously, Mike worked as an economist with banks, the White House Office of Management and Budget, international development agencies, federal agencies, and trade associations. In 2002, he founded Foreword Financial, a professional training business for bank executives which he ran until 2009. He has taught economics at Nova University, Barry University and George Washington University and has substituted at dozens of South Florida public schools. He has a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering and an M.B.A. from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Economics from George Washington University.

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