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Reps. Pressley & Adams Introduce House Resolution Condemning Police Brutality

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To: Steve Johnston



Following George Floyd Murder, Reps. Pressley, Adams, Omar, Bass, Lee, and Others Introduce House Resolution Condemning Police Brutality

WASHINGTON – Congresswomen Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), Alma Adams (NC-12), and Ilhan Omar (MN-05), in partnership with Congresswoman Karen Bass (CA-37), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13), introduced a resolution to condemn police brutality, racial profiling and the excessive use of force. The resolution comes days after the murder of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, as well as the recent murder of Breonna Taylor by police in Louisville, Kentucky and the hundreds of other lives robbed by police violence.

In addition to calling on the House of Representatives to condemn all acts of police brutality, racial profiling and excessive use of force, the resolution calls for the adoption of reforms and policies at all levels of government to end these injustices including:

1. Efforts to improve oversight and independent investigations to hold individual law enforcement officers and police departments accountable

2. Calling on the Department of Justice to reassert its statutory authority to investigate individual instances of racial profiling, police brutality and violence and investigate and litigate individual law enforcement officers and police departments routinely violating civil rights;

3. Supporting efforts to establishing all-civilian review boards with

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the authority to investigate incidents of police misconduct to ensure community-level oversight, accountability, and disciplinary action of police officers; and

4. The adoption of sound and unbiased law enforcement policies at all levels of government that reduce the disparate impact of police brutality, racial profiling and use of force on Black and Brown people and other historically marginalized communities.

“After 400 years on this continent, Black people are still being murdered in broad daylight. The time to address this issue is now,” **said Congresswoman Adams.** “I am proud to join Congresswoman Pressley and many of my colleagues in standing up to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless others. Congress must act to address police brutality now because Black lives can’t afford to wait for the next election.”

“For too long, Black and brown bodies have been profiled, surveilled, policed, lynched, choked, brutalized and murdered at the hands of police officers,” **said Congresswoman Pressley.** “We cannot allow these fatal injustices to go unchecked any longer. There can be no justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, or any of the human beings who have been killed by law enforcement, for in a just world, they would still be alive. There must, however, be accountability.”

“From slavery to lynching to Jim Crow, Black people in this country have been brutalized and dehumanized for centuries,” **said Congresswoman Omar.** “The war on drugs, mass criminalization, and increasingly militarized police forces have led to the targeting, torture and murder of countless Americans, disproportionately black and brown. The murder of George Floyd in my district is not a one-off event. We cannot fully right these wrongs until we admit we have a problem. As the People’s House, the House of Representatives must acknowledge these historical injustices and call for a comprehensive solution. There are many steps on the path to justice, but we must begin to take them.”

“Over the last few months, we have witnessed heightened violent acts of white supremacy, police brutality and targeted harassment because we were simply living while Black,” **said Chair Bass.** “And over and over again, offenders go unpunished, allowing this viscous cycle to continue with impunity. We can not move forward as a nation until what has broken is fixed.”

“George Floyd’s tragic murder shows how much work we have to fix the relationships between law enforcement and black and brown people,” **said Congresswoman Lee.** “We have seen far too many young men and women of color murdered by police, for as little as driving their car, riding public transportation, having a cell phone, or just being in their own homes. Police officers are supposed to defuse violence — not inflict it on black and brown communities. While the majority of police officers approach their job in a professional manner, we cannot allow black and brown bodies to be targeted, attacked, and killed with impunity. It’s going to take a lot of work and a serious reckoning with our society’s ingrained racial biases to stop this violence. We need to restore the proper role of police in our community — as public servants who are here to protect everyone, not just those they deem worthy of protection. Being Black in America should not be a death sentence.”

In addition to Congresswomen Pressley, Omar, Bass, and Lee, the resolution is also co-sponsored by Reps. Joaquin Castro (TX-20), Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Judy Chu (CA-27), Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Katherine Clark

(MA-05), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, James P. McGovern (MA-02), Chair of the House Rules Committee, Rashida Tlaib (MI-13), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (NY-14), Joseph P. Kennedy III (MA-04), and Lori Trahan (MA-03).

The legislation is endorsed by: The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, National Action Network, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, ACLU, ACLU of Massachusetts, ACLU of Minnesota, The Justice Collaborative, Color of Change, The National Urban League, Lawyers for Civil Rights, Black and Pink, Boston Chapter, Center for Popular Democracy, Moms Rising, Drug Policy Alliance, New Florida Majority, PolicyLink, The National Black Police Association, and The Vera Institute of Justice.

Congresswoman Alma Adams represents North Carolina’s 12th Congressional District (Charlotte) and serves as Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education & Labor Committee, where she serves as Chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee.

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