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NAACP Legal Defense Fund Statement on Violent Waffle House Arrest in North Carolina

On May 8th, a viral video began circulating of a violent police takedown outside of a North Carolina Waffle House. The footage shows Anthony Wall, an unarmed Black man who had just taken his younger sister to prom, get choked and forcefully thrown to the ground by a white Warsaw, North Carolina, police officer. This incident comes just weeks after the overly aggressive arrest of another unarmed Black Waffle House customer, Chikesia Clemons. [Sherrilyn Ifill](#), President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement:

“We’re once again outraged by a video showing police officers using excessive force on an unarmed, non-violent African-American Waffle House customer. Once again this incident was sparked when a Waffle House employee called the police after the patron allegedly complained about customer service. And once again the police responded with violence. Last month, in Saraland, Alabama, a customer’s mere questioning of why she was being charged extra for plastic utensils – when she never had before – appeared to spiral out of control after employees called the police. The dehumanizing arrest of Chikesia Clemons alarmed neither the Saraland Police Department nor Waffle House, who have both failed to accept any responsibility for potential wrongdoing and hold those at fault responsible.

“After a reported small disagreement at a Waffle House in Warsaw, North Carolina, it appears that employees unreasonably heightened the situation by calling local law enforcement. Twenty-two-year-old Anthony Wall, who had just taken his sixteen-year-old sister to prom, was then choked and violently thrown on the ground by Warsaw Police Officer Frank Moss. The officer’s actions were grossly inappropriate, and we call on the Warsaw Police Department and District Attorney to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation of the officer’s conduct by publicly releasing any body-worn and/or surveillance camera footage, as well as audio of the call for police service. The officer should also be placed on administrative duty during the investigation.

“In both cases, the Black customers were reportedly unarmed and non-violent. Neither situation warranted police intervention, let alone such gratuitous use-of-force. Waffle House must conduct an extensive review and overhaul of its policies to ensure that employees do not needlessly subject customers of color to police contact and brutality. Police officials are not a private security force for untrained Waffle House employees. Waffle House cannot continue to avoid this issue.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.