For Immediate Release
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NAACP Legal Defense Fund Statement on the Second Anniversary of Freddie Gray’s Death

Today, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) remembers Freddie Gray, a young African-American man who suffered a tragic and preventable death at the hands of police in Baltimore.

“Today our thoughts are with the Gray family and all families who have been forced to face the unimaginable pain of losing a loved one to police misconduct,” said Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of LDF. “To this day, no officers have been held responsible in a court of law for the conduct that led to Mr. Gray’s death, and it’s likely none ever will. The only justice we can hope for now is the meaningful policing reform that the residents of Baltimore so deeply deserve.”

“Since that day two years ago, the entire Baltimore community has been unyielding in pushing for real and sustainable policing reform so that Mr. Gray’s death will not have been in vain. While those efforts led to a 227-page court-enforceable agreement between the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and Baltimore City officials to remedy the Baltimore City Police Department’s long list of unlawful practices, the work of changing police culture in Baltimore is far from over. A federal judge recently approved the consent decree despite last minute backpedaling by the DOJ, and it will require unceasing dedication from the people of Baltimore to hold the DOJ and Baltimore officials to their commitment to enforce the agreement. This day of remembrance must deepen our resolve to continue fighting for reform until each and every provision of the agreement is implemented and institutionalized.”

In the coming weeks and months, there will be developments relating to enforcement of the consent decree that we urge Baltimore residents and stakeholders to follow closely and participate in:

- By July 2017, Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh must appoint five persons to serve on the Civilian Oversight Task Force, which will be responsible for reviewing and commenting on the city’s current system of civilian oversight of the police department. We have asked the Mayor to solicit nominations from Baltimoreans and publicize the list of nominees on the city’s website before making final decisions.
- The DOJ and Baltimore City officials must select an independent monitor to oversee the implementation of the consent decree, and according to a timeline submitted to the court, the parties will solicit applications for six weeks. After that point, the parties must allow the public to review the applications and make recommendations on who should be interviewed for the position.
We encourage residents and stakeholders to learn more about the selection process for the Civilian Oversight Task Force and the independent monitor through local news or by visiting the city’s website at [http://www.baltimorecity.gov/](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/).

“While the agreement between the Justice Department and city officials is not a cure all, it offers a road map for fair and lawful policing in Baltimore City,” said Monique Dixon, Deputy Director of Policy and Senior Counsel at LDF. “We urge Baltimore residents and stakeholders to become familiar with the terms of the agreement and serve as individual monitors of it. We have asked city officials to continue to solicit and incorporate public input as they nominate an individual to monitor the decree and identify persons to serve on the Civilian Oversight Task Force. Reform will not happen overnight, but it also will not happen if we stop demanding it every day.”

Any residents looking to learn more about the consent decree can find the entire agreement [here](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/), as well as a shorter summary [here](http://www.baltimorecity.gov/).

As LDF remembers Freddie Gray, we continue to promote unbiased and responsible policing practices in Baltimore and elsewhere. As part of LDF’s Policing Reform Campaign, we advocate for: (a) mandatory annual collection, analysis, disaggregation, and public reporting of data on arrests, use-of-force incidents, and pedestrian and traffic stop data; (b) training on implicit bias, de-escalation, use of force, adolescent development, and proper interactions with persons with mental illness and other disabilities; (c) enforcement of these trainings through close monitoring of police conduct and the imposition of disciplinary actions or retraining; and (d) timely investigation and resolution of civilian complaints against police.

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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.*