



**For Immediate Release**  
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**Contact: David Jacobs**  
212-965-2255 / [djacobs@naacpldf.org](mailto:djacobs@naacpldf.org)

## **Civil Rights Groups Call for Oversight Hearing on NYPD Gang Policing Practices**

Today, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) and the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) sent a [letter](#) to the New York City Council Committee on Public Safety, as well as the Committee on Oversight and Investigations, requesting public hearings on the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) gang policing practices. In the letter, LDF and CCR outline deep-seated concerns with the growing national problem of gang policing, with an emphasis on the potential due process violations stemming from the NYPD's "precision policing" strategy.

The letter notes how the NYPD relies on a secret, inaccurate, and racially disproportionate "gang database" to conduct military-style raids in private homes and low-income housing developments, largely targeting communities of color. In adding New Yorkers to the database, the NYPD uses arbitrary criteria that may be indicative of innocence as well as gang membership and offers no recourse for innocent individuals mistakenly identified as gang members. Not only does the NYPD not notify individuals of their inclusion in the database, but the Department also fails to provide a mechanism to challenge a gang designation and makes no attempt to purge the database of errors.

"Since the NYPD's stop-and-frisk practices were ruled unconstitutional, it has used its gang database to surveil, monitor and violently arrest people of color throughout the City," said LDF Assistant Counsel [Marne Lenox](#). "We're calling for public hearings to shed light on the NYPD's clandestine gang database, unearth the errors that undermine this policing tool, and hold the NYPD accountable for any abuses of power. Without proper oversight from the City Council, New Yorkers of color are susceptible to violations of their due process rights and will continue to suffer the consequences of the NYPD's imprecise policing."

"Just as it did with stop-and-frisk, the NYPD, through its gang policing strategies, is once again using race as a proxy for criminality to illegally target young people of color for unconstitutional and abusive law enforcement action," said [Darius Charney](#), senior staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights. "The City Council stepped up back in 2013 to curb the worst abuses of the stop-and-frisk era, and we hope it will do so again."

LDF and CCR have been deeply involved in policing reform efforts in New York City aimed at ending racially-biased policing and building trust between the NYPD and the five boroughs they serve. These efforts include the landmark settlements in [Davis v. New York](#) and [Floyd v. City of New York](#) respectively, which each challenged the NYPD's stop-and-frisk tactics. LDF also hosted a community forum in the Bronx last September to hear directly from impacted residents and community members about their experiences with the NYPD's gang raids.

LDF and CCR's letter to the City Council is written in support of the 27 organizations making the same [request](#) to hold public hearings on this important 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.*

*The Center for Constitutional Rights is dedicated to advancing and protecting the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Founded in 1966 by attorneys who represented civil rights movements in the South, CCR is a non-profit legal and educational organization committed to the creative use of law as a positive force for social change. Visit [www.ccrjustice.org](http://www.ccrjustice.org); follow [@theCCR](#).*