For Immediate Release
Monday, January 15, 2018

NAACP Legal Defense Fund Statement on NYPD’s Violent Response to Peaceful Immigration Protest

Last Thursday, New York City police officers responded aggressively to an immigrant rights protest, violently arresting two council members and more than a dozen other demonstrators. Jin Hee Lee, Deputy Director of Litigation at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, provided the following statement:

“Last Thursday, the public witnessed a shocking display of undue violence by NYPD officers against non-violent protesters. As our nation commemorates Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we must not lose sight of the vital role of peaceful protest in the struggle for justice and equality. Having represented Dr. King – during the Birmingham campaign in 1963, in Selma in 1965, and elsewhere throughout the South – LDF stands firmly with all who engage in peaceful advocacy for a more fair and just society. This is especially true during these tumultuous times, when the rights of so many vulnerable and marginalized people are at risk. We urge the NYPD not only to apologize for this abuse, but also to take all necessary actions to ensure such misconduct does not happen again, and call on the City Council to hold an oversight hearing on the NYPD’s policing of protests.”

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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.