



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **NAACP Legal Defense Fund Submits Written Testimony In Opposition of Efforts to Allow School Police to Carry Firearms During School Hours**

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. ([LDF](#)) today submitted written testimony to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners opposing any legislative advocacy aimed at changing a state law that prohibits the Baltimore school police from carrying firearms on schools grounds during school hours. The testimony was submitted today ahead of a public hearing this evening.

Currently, Maryland state law only allows Baltimore school police officers assigned to schools to carry firearms outside of regular school hours. LDF's testimony asserts that repealing the state law would result in increased safety risks for students and school staff.

**“Baltimore students surveyed this year have said school officers often use force to resolve conflicts and changing this state law could exacerbate the risk of excessive use of force,”** said [Nicole Dooley](#), LDF Policy Counsel. **“Instead of focusing on where school police can carry firearms, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners should prioritize support services for their students and faculty and take concrete action to end any implicit bias and disciplinary policies that keep students of color from feeling safe and treated fairly in school.”**

In the written testimony, LDF cites evidence that the presence of guns increases chances of violence, listing several incidents that occurred outside of Maryland due to firearms being carried by officers and other adults on campus. Cases include an instructor accidentally discharging a weapon in a classroom and a school police officer mistakenly leaving her firearm in a school bathroom.

The testimony also cites to research that reveals how racial biases and stereotypes result in firearms being used more often against people of color. Subjects of the cited studies were more likely to inaccurately believe they saw a gun when observing a Black person and fired their weapon faster when the potentially armed person was Black. LDF also points out that students

who have already been subjected to trauma through exposure to gun violence could be re-traumatized if school police are permitted to carry firearms.

Read the full written testimony [here](#).

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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.*