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LDF Statement on New Baltimore Police Commissioner Joel Fitzgerald

Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement in response to Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh's selection of Joel Fitzgerald as Baltimore's next police commissioner:

“Mayor Pugh has now confirmed that Fort Worth police chief Joel Fitzgerald is her pick for Baltimore’s police commissioner. We urge the Mayor and City Council to open the confirmation process and allow city residents and stakeholders to meet with Police Commissioner-Designee Fitzgerald to determine if he meets the qualifications residents detailed in a letter to the Mayor in August.

“The incoming Baltimore Police Commissioner has a responsibility to build trust between officers and the residents they serve. The Commissioner should understand the need for quality community participation and prioritize conforming to the consent decree and improving public safety in the city. We look forward to participating in any public meetings with Fitzgerald in the coming weeks.”

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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.