



June 22, 2020

**Via electronic mail**

Mike Brown, District 1  
Rhonda Jerome, District 2  
Virginia Jamison, District 3  
Ron Brinson, District 4  
Jerome Heyward, District 5  
Dorothy Williams, District 6  
Samuel Hart, District 7  
Bob King, District 8  
Kenny Skipper, District 9  
Michael Brown, District 10  
North Charleston City Council  
City Hall  
2500 City Hall Lane, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
North Charleston, S.C. 29406

**RE: Police Evaluation Research Committee's Consideration of Request for Independent Racial Bias Audit of the North Charleston Police Department**

Dear North Charleston City Council Members:

On behalf of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this letter to be read into the record of today's meeting of the North Charleston City Council's Police Evaluation Research Committee. LDF is the nation's first civil rights legal organization. For 80 years, we have used litigation, policy advocacy, community organizing, and strategic communications to advance equity and racial justice in the areas of education, political participation, economic justice, and criminal justice. Our Policing Reform Campaign has supported policy reform efforts at the national and local levels to advance unbiased and accountable policing. On April 13, 2020, the ACLU of South Carolina, Charleston Area Justice Ministry and LDF [sent a letter](#) to Mayor Keith Summey and city council members urging you to hire qualified, independent auditors to conduct a racial bias audit of the North Charleston Police Department (NCPD). We are submitting this letter to present this request to you once again with a sense of urgency.

For five years, LDF has worked with North Charleston residents, city officials and NCPD personnel to address racial disparities in policing practices. In 2016, we supported city officials' [request to](#) the Community Oriented Policing Services Office of the U.S. Department of Justice (COPS Office) to conduct a collaborative review of NCPD's policies and practices. Specifically, LDF provided to the COPS Office and NCPD officials our 2017 report, [It Matters If You're Black or White](#), which found racial disparities in the filing and resolution of complaints against North

Charleston police officers. Unfortunately, the COPS Office ended its collaborative reform assessments without releasing the NCPD report to the public. In 2018, LDF [filed a lawsuit](#) against the COPS Office alleging violations of the federal Freedom of Information Act for failing to provide a copy of the NCPD assessment. This lawsuit is pending.

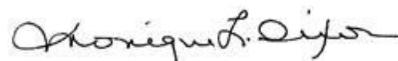
Believing that city officials were committed to completing this public assessment of the NCPD, local advocates and LDF strongly urged North Charleston elected officials to conduct a racial bias audit of the police department. In fact, in May 2019, the city's Citizen's Advisory Commission on Police-Community Relations [also recommended an audit](#), to no avail.

After recognizing that racial disparities in police [traffic stops persist](#), in April 2020, we submitted a letter signed by almost 300 North Charleston area residents urging you to follow [the lead of Charleston, S.C.](#) and conduct a racial bias audit of the NCPD. Now, more than ever, North Charleston elected officials must respond affirmatively to this request as cities around the world engage in sustained demonstrations protesting police violence and demanding reforms in the aftermath of the police killings of Breonna Taylor in Louisville, KY and George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN. Indeed, the recent police shooting death of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta, GA, as he ran away from Atlanta police officers, is eerily similar to the police shooting death of Walter Scott in North Charleston five years ago.

North Charleston city officials have an opportunity to respond to this national moment of unrest and demands for policing reforms by finishing what you began four years ago – an independent review of NCPD's policing practices to identify and address racial biases. The residents of North Charleston have waited long enough, and the nation is watching North Charleston and other cities that have done little to change its policing practices after a needless fatal shooting of an unarmed Black man.

Thank you for considering this request. Please do not hesitate to contact Estherjoy Mungai or me with any questions or concerns at 202-682-1300.

Sincerely yours,



Monique L. Dixon  
Deputy Director of Policy/Director of  
State Advocacy