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LDF Issues Statement on the Department of Justice Charging Former and Current Officers Involved in the Killing of Breonna Taylor

Today, more than two years after Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) officers senselessly killed Breonna Taylor in her home, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has [charged](#) four current and former LMPD officers – Officer Joshua Jaynes, former Detective Kelly Goodlett, Officer Kyle Meany, and former Officer Brett Hankison – in connection with the execution of the no-knock search warrant that resulted in Ms. Taylor’s death. The charges include unlawful conspiracies, unconstitutional use of force, obstruction, and civil rights offenses.

“The killing of Breonna Taylor was tragic,” said [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) Director of Policy Lisa Cylar Barrett. “We are grateful to the DOJ and all involved in the investigation that led to today’s announcement. By taking this welcome step towards accountability, the DOJ is acting upon its founding purpose to defend and protect the civil rights of every person in this country. We hope today’s announcement brings some degree of encouragement to the family of Ms. Taylor that a measure of justice is within reach. Breonna Taylor deserves to be alive, and as we wait for the officers involved in her death to finally be held accountable, we must continue the work to ensure that law enforcement is barred from using the tactics and mechanisms that took her life and threaten the lives of so many others.”

“Breonna Taylor was sleeping peacefully when Louisville Metro Police Department officers brazenly and forcefully entered her home and ultimately killed her,” said LDF Director of Strategic Initiatives Jin Hee Lee. “For over two years, advocates across the country, as well as Ms. Taylor’s family, have tirelessly called for accountability for those who are responsible for her tragic death. Today’s news from the DOJ is critical to answering those calls. We commend the DOJ for this long overdue indictment because law enforcement officers must recognize that they are not above the law and must be held swiftly accountable in all instances of misconduct.”

In November 2020, LDF’s Justice in Public Safety Project issued “[Justice Denied: A Call for a New Grand Jury Investigation into the Killing of Breonna Taylor](#),” an extensive report that concluded that the Kentucky Attorney General’s Office presented to the original grand jury a biased view of the case that favored the law enforcement officers who killed Ms. Taylor, and departed from the manner in which other cases had been presented to this grand jury by presenting the charges only at the end of the proceedings.

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Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF 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.