



For Immediate Release
August 4, 2019

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Statement by LDF President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill on the Tragic Events in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio

“LDF deeply mourns those killed in the mass shootings in El Paso, TX, and those killed just hours later in a mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio. We pray for comfort for their families, and for healing and recovery for the scores who were wounded in these attacks.

“This is a defining moment in our country. The epidemic of mass gun violence and the rise of violent white supremacy have created a national emergency. This emergency has been heightened by two alarming realities. The President of the United States persists in the deliberate use of racist and incendiary language that demonizes fellow Americans and encourages white supremacists. In addition, neither his Administration nor the Senate leadership will support solutions to help keep Americans safe. The Senate Majority Leader has refused to allow votes on common sense gun reform measures for years. The Attorney General of the United States, the nation’s chief law enforcement officer, has offered no comprehensive plan to address white supremacist domestic terrorism, despite recent testimony from the FBI Director confirming that white supremacist terrorism is a singular and urgent threat to our nation’s security.

“We need legislation to pass commonsense gun reforms. And we need it now. We need a robust law enforcement plan to investigate, infiltrate and prosecute violent white supremacists. Most of all, we need leadership in this country that believes in, and embraces the key principles articulated in our foundational documents: that all men and women are created equal. That every person in our borders is entitled to the equal protection of laws. We need leadership that believes in, and that acts boldly to protect the dignity of every person. We need leadership that is prepared to use the power of government to help knit this nation together in common purpose, and to aggressively protect us from threats foreign and domestic.

“We remain committed to fighting for a more just America, and we stand shoulder to shoulder with the Latino and immigrant communities, and other communities like our own, that have experienced the devastating threat of white supremacist terrorism. We stand resolute and uncompromising in our commitment to justice and equality, to peace and to democracy.”

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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.