



**For Immediate Release**  
**Tuesday, June 29, 2021**

**LDF Media**  
212-965-2200 / [media@naacpldf.org](mailto:media@naacpldf.org)

### **DeKalb County Extends Water Disconnection Moratorium**

Yesterday, Michael Thurmond, Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, Georgia, announced that the County's water disconnection moratorium would be extended until September 1, 2021. On April 20, 2021, DeKalb County announced its plan to lift its five-year-old water disconnection moratorium and resume service disconnections on July 1.

In May, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) and the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) sent a joint letter to Mr. Thurmond urging the County to maintain its moratorium until it implements sufficient safeguards to mitigate the significant health and financial harms caused by water disconnections, use federal COVID-19 relief funds to help residents that have been impacted by the pandemic, and address the persistent problems of billing errors and disputes, which prompted the establishment of the moratorium in 2016.

“This is a welcome development,” said LDF Special Economic Justice Counsel Jason Bailey. “Water is a human right, and access to water is critically important, especially during the summer months and amidst a global health crisis. Ending the moratorium now would put vulnerable County residents at substantial risk – especially Black and low-income residents who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. This extension also gives the County more time to improve its billing dispute process and consider using COVID-19 relief funds to help financially vulnerable residents. We look forward to speaking with Mr. Thurmond to find a more permanent solution.”

###

*Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. 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. 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. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).*