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**In letter, NAACP Legal Defense Fund and Partners Demand That
Attorney General Sessions to Develop Comprehensive Response
to Rise in Hate Crimes**

October 30, 2018 | The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) joined five other civil rights racial justice organizations today in sending a letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions demanding that he develop a comprehensive plan to address the alarming rise in hate crimes in the United States, exemplified in recent days by the massacre of 11 worshippers at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and the murder of two Black people outside a grocery store in Kentucky. The letter also demands that Sessions to investigate as domestic terrorism both the Pittsburgh murders and the recent mailing of pipe bombs to 14 prominent critics of President Trump.

“The data is unmistakably clear: hate crimes and hate groups have surged in the United States since 2017,” said LDF President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill. “Yet Attorney General Sessions has yet to develop a comprehensive and proactive plan for countering these abhorrent acts, even as he has found time to announce new initiatives to combat gang and gun violence.

“It is no coincidence that this uptick has occurred at a moment when the language of racism, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia has been promoted and condoned by elected leaders in our country, including the president. It is also occurring within the context of this administration’s attacks on our nation’s bedrock civil and human rights legal protections and infrastructure, which have historically served to defend against such tragedies. It is past time for the Attorney General to fulfill his responsibility as the nation’s chief law enforcement officer by speaking out forcefully against these heinous acts, and, more importantly by developing a substantive plan to prevent these tragedies from devastating more lives and communities.”

In addition to LDF, the letter was signed by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the NAACP, the National Action Network, the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, and the National Urban League [Read the full letter here.](#)

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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.