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LDF Responds to Reports of Finalist in Search for New Baltimore Police Commissioner

Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement in response to reports that the City of Baltimore has identified a finalist in its search for a new police commissioner:

“We are disappointed that Mayor Pugh has not followed the lead of other cities in giving the public ample time to assess and interact with the final candidates for Baltimore Police Commissioner. It is our hope that once the finalist is officially announced, the city council will make the candidate available to answer questions at public forums. The selection of a commissioner at this moment in Baltimore is of paramount importance. As Judge Bedar, who is overseeing implementation of the federal consent decree, has advised, Baltimore needs a leader ‘who is bold, strong, and capable of inspiring the community but also conforms’ with the consent decree. Community groups [have made similar demands](#) and have emphasized the importance of an open and transparent process that will engender confidence among the public and ensure that the residents of Baltimore are partners in the urgent project of building public safety in the city.

“The findings of the Justice Department’s 2016 civil rights report, the federal convictions of officers involved in the Baltimore Police Gun Trace Task Force, and the recent video of a new police officer beating an unarmed Black man all underscore the necessity of hiring a police commissioner who can positively transform the police department and build trust between officers and the residents they serve.”

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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.