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LDF Denounces Decision to Indefinitely Extend Enhanced Federal Law Enforcement Presence in Washington, DC

Yesterday, Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser [issued](#) an executive order that indefinitely extends cooperation between the District of Columbia and a number of federal law enforcement agencies to continue their enhanced law enforcement efforts in the District. This development comes despite the fact that [recent polling by The Washington Post](#) shows that these aggressive tactics are deeply unpopular with District residents – a vast majority (80%) of whom oppose the Trump Administration's efforts to [federalize law enforcement](#).

In response to the mayor's executive order, **Legal Defense Fund (LDF) Associate Director-Counsel Todd A. Cox** issued the following statement:

"Yesterday's decision to indefinitely extend the enhanced federal law enforcement presence and activities in Washington, D.C. is alarming, misguided, and profoundly disappointing. An increased presence of armed federal law enforcement officers in the District will not make our communities safer. Safety for D.C. residents must include protection from police violence, yet the mayor's decision subjects D.C. residents to an increased risk of it. Evidence has shown that this tactic is not only ineffective but actively harmful, disproportionately targeting Black communities, escalating tensions, and undermining public safety.

"Moreover, the District's cooperation in targeting unhoused people to forcibly clear their encampments has nothing to do with public safety, and instead only further destabilizes and harms our most vulnerable residents. By embracing the [President's targeting of unhoused people](#) for law enforcement action, the Mayor's order condones and gives cover to his coercive and punitive policies towards unhoused DC residents.

"This strategy is part of a well-worn playbook. Throughout history, authoritarian leaders have consolidated power and expanded the military state by fabricating emergencies, stoking public fear, and scapegoating members of identity groups it deems undesirable – the unhoused, immigrants, people of color.

"By embracing this playbook, D.C. is legitimizing President Trump's dangerous antidemocratic agenda."

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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.