LDF Sends Letter to Kentucky AG Daniel Cameron Requesting New Special Prosecutor and Grand Jury for the Shooting of Breonna Taylor

Last week, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) terminated Detectives Joshua Jaynes and Myles Cosgrove, two of the officers involved in the fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor. In response, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is once again calling on Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron to appoint a special prosecutor and empanel a new grand jury to investigate whether the LMPD officers involved in the killing of Ms. Taylor should be criminally charged.

In a letter to AG Cameron sent earlier this week, LDF President and Director-Counsel Sherrilyn Ifill wrote: “The Louisville community and the nation were understandably dismayed and outraged by your September 23, 2020, announcement stating that the grand jury declined to indict any officers on charges relating to Ms. Taylor’s death and instead indicted one officer for shooting into a neighboring apartment.”

The letter continues: “Now that the LMPD has terminated two additional officers and concluded that Detective Cosgrove used excessive force in his fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor, it is crucial that a new grand jury be empaneled to consider all relevant evidence and potential criminal charges which your office’s prosecution team denied to the first grand jury.”

The letter goes on to urge the appointment of an independent special prosecutor to consider all applicable criminal charges against LMPD officers, iterating that failing to do so will demonstrate to the public that the Kentucky Legal System does not recognize the sanctity and dignity of Breonna Taylor’s life.

In November 2020, LDF released its review of the grand jury proceedings in the Breonna Taylor case, which revealed that AG Cameron’s team presented evidence in a biased manner that protected the LMPD officers rather than hold them accountable. This bias was revealed in a number of ways, including relying heavily on one witness who supported the LMPD officers’ version of events, despite contrary statements from multiple witnesses; misleading the grand jury regarding the validity of the search warrant; and failing to adequately respond to grand jurors’ inquiries.

LDF is committed to working with the community, elected officials and policymakers to reimagine public safety and bring an end to police violence in Black and Brown communities. For communities of color across the nation and the residents of Louisville to have trust in their public safety system, there must be transparency and fairness in the police accountability process at the national, state, and local levels.

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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. 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.