



**For Immediate Release
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LDF Issues Statement on Video Footage of Police Shooting of Jayland Walker

Today, the Akron, Ohio, police department released body camera footage of the fatal police shooting of Jayland Walker, a 25-year-old Black man who was stopped by law enforcement for an alleged traffic matter earlier in the week. The video footage raises more questions than it answers about the conduct of the eight police officers who shot Mr. Walker approximately 60 times and have since been placed on administrative leave.

In response to today's video release, [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) President and Director-Counsel Janai S. Nelson issued the following statement:

“The tragic killing of Jayland Walker once again underscores just how deeply dysfunctional and discriminatory America’s system of policing continues to be. As we understand them, the facts and video footage in Mr. Walker’s death give us significant pause about the legality of the officers’ conduct. We demand an immediate and fully transparent investigation of this highly suspicious incident by the Akron Police Department, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.

“That this killing was precipitated by a traffic stop underscores that there must be reform of the code of conduct for law enforcement agencies nationwide regarding traffic stops as we rethink public safety from the ground up. Since 2017, law enforcement officers nationwide [have killed](#) nearly 600 people during traffic stops. Of those, a disproportionate 28% have been Black drivers. We also know that drivers of color are more likely to be stopped and searched by police than white drivers. We call on cities and towns across the country to ban ‘low-level’ traffic stops by armed officers, as [Philadelphia did last year](#), and for unarmed civilian responders to be used more broadly for traffic offenses.

“Our nation must reimagine and replace our public safety system with one that takes into account the constitutional and civil rights of all persons, especially Black people whom our current policing system was originally designed to target – and continues to do so with alarming frequency.

“We send our deepest condolences to Mr. Walker’s family and friends and will continue to monitor this case as the investigation unfolds and new information comes to light.”

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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.