



For Immediate Release
Wednesday, February 20, 2019

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LDF Statement on U.S. Supreme Court Decision on Excessive Fines and Fees

In *Timbs v. Indiana*, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously [held](#) that the Eighth Amendment's protection against excessive fines and fees applies to the states as well as the federal government. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) filed an [amicus brief](#) in the case making clear that historically, states used criminal fines as a way to force Black people into indentured servitude, and that communities of color are still disproportionately subject to criminal fines and forfeitures. [Daniel Harawa](#), Assistant Counsel at LDF, offered the following statement on today's decision:

“The Supreme Court’s decision in *Timbs* rightly extends the Eighth Amendment’s protections against excessive fines to all states and their residents. The Court’s decision builds upon the argument raised in our brief by pointing to the historic use of criminal fines to enforce a racial hierarchy and compel Black Americans into indentured servitude. This ruling also places important constitutional limitations on rampant asset forfeiture abuses at the state level, which disproportionately target communities of color to this day.”

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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.

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