



For Immediate Release
Saturday, May 25, 2024

LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF Issues Statement Honoring George Floyd and Calling for a New Framework for Public Safety and a Continued Commitment to Racial Equity Four Years After His Death

Today marks four years since George Floyd was murdered by former Minneapolis Police Department officer Derek Chauvin.

Janai Nelson, President and Director-Counsel of the [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF), issued the following statement about the incident that triggered unprecedented protests around the world:

“We extend our heartfelt condolences to George Floyd’s family and stand with them in their unrelenting fight alongside countless advocates to achieve lasting, impactful change in our public safety system. Four years have passed since the harrowing murder of Mr. Floyd set off worldwide protests calling for justice, accountability, and racial equity. The movement borne out of George Floyd’s murder demonstrated the importance and power of protest to inspire social progress and change.

“While a series of unprecedented and important reforms aimed at transforming our public safety systems resulted from this tragedy, there is still much to be done in honor of George Floyd’s memory and other victims of police violence. The extremist backlash against the worldwide acknowledgment of systemic, anti-Black racism in 2020 and the actions taken in both public and private sectors to end its pernicious effects must be confronted with renewed activism. Instead, [over 100 anti-protest bills](#) have been introduced in states across the country after the racial justice protests of 2020 and research by LDF’s [Thurgood Marshall Institute](#) shows that racial justice protests are disproportionately targeted by law enforcement and racial justice protestors are treated more aggressively by law enforcement compared to other protesters.”

“In addition, since January 2021, at least [44 states](#) have introduced legislation or taken some other action to restrict or censor the teaching of systemic racism and sexism in the classroom. More recently, anti-civil rights extremists have attacked diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs—which should be the bare minimum of actions to advance racial equity—through lawsuits, complaints, and legislation that distort and mischaracterize what is “equality” and “discrimination.”

“As Americans committed to racial justice and equality, we must build on the momentum that followed George Floyd’s killing and renew our commitment to challenge longstanding barriers to opportunity and structural disadvantages faced by Black people, other people of color, women, and LGBTQ+ people. LDF’s new Equal Protection Initiative has issued several resources to help advance racial equity, including [The Economic Imperative to Ensure Equal Opportunity: Guidance for Employers, Businesses, and Funders](#), which encourages the private sector to invest in programs that advance racial equity and are fully permissible under federal law. Additionally, LDF’s [Pro Truth Initiative](#) is partnering with local stakeholders to ensure that all students in K-12 and higher education classrooms are provided the full and accurate truth of American history and current events that pertain to systemic inequalities. And, importantly, LDF’s Justice in Public Safety Project has published a [Framework for Public Safety](#) that advocates for community resources outside of law enforcement for more effective public safety, including safety from the type of police violence that caused George Floyd’s death.”

“To honor George Floyd’s memory, and the memory of all those impacted by the injustices of police violence and racial bias, we must continue working towards a multiracial democracy that eradicates corrosive anti-Black racism and one that values and protects the dignity and humanity of all people.”

###

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.