



Louisville
Urban League

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N E W S R E L E A S E

**MEMBERS OF THE LOUISVILLE URBAN LEAGUE BOARD
STATEMENT ON THE BREONNA TAYLOR CASE DECISION**

UPDATED, OCTOBER 4, 2020, LOUISVILLE, KY—The city of Louisville, our city, has been at the epicenter of the nation’s historic reckoning on racism -- for four straight months. Citizens of Louisville have been protesting on the street all that time demanding Justice for Breonna Taylor.

We know that organized peaceful protests for a righteous cause have a long history of bringing positive change in our democracy. And we know, too, that when police aggression or opportunistic vandals turn protests violent, the righteous moment and the righteous message are hijacked -- and our cities are convulsed.

Louisville has been boarded up for too many months. Our hearts have been boarded up for too many centuries. This is us. It is time to turn the page.

On Tuesday, Sept. 15, Louisville Metro settled a wrongful death civil suit with Breonna Taylor’s family – a settlement that includes important reforms to address police accountability and to start to heal the broken relationship between LMPD and the community. We commend Breonna Taylor’s mother, Tamika Palmer, and the family’s attorneys, for pushing to include these reforms. We commend our local government for embracing these reforms. These measures are a win for our city, paid for with Breonna’s blood.

Then on September 23, Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron announced that no one will be held responsible for the death of Breonna Taylor. Instead, one officer was indicted for firing wildly -- and endangering her neighbors. Fifteen hours of audiotaped recordings of grand jury testimony confirm that no case involving her death was even presented.

This is not what we were expecting from the attorney general’s protracted investigation, and at least one grand juror was disappointed as well. This does not feel like justice to us, or to many people in our city.

Where do we go from here?

If we can’t find justice in the criminal justice system, we must pursue a new direction for our governmental policies and societal values -- to preserve and honor the life of

Breonna Taylor, and also the life of David McAtee, in our collective memory -- and to move our community forward, in her name and in his name, to a better future.

Now is the time for every Louisvillian -- and especially those with power and resources -- to address and atone for more than 400 years of hateful, exclusionary and violent policies and practices intentionally designed to exclude Blacks from society and from the economy. There is no denying that this is our history -- and there is no denying that it reaches into our present reality still today.

The city of Louisville will never thrive if so many of our Black citizens experience trauma and fear and pain, every single day -- excluded from the economy, left with unmet basic needs, and over-policed on top of it all. The anxiety and frustration are real -- and exhausting. The anger is valid. The rage has been righteous.

Fortunately, there is [a positive path forward](#) for the community we love. In June, the Louisville Urban League and more than 50 other local organizations, issued a 20-page document that sets out immediate and specific actions to help dismantle systemic racism so that Louisville can become a city where everyone thrives, according to the hierarchy of needs.

The Path Forward document calls for a \$50 million Black Community Fund to:

- Support existing and new small businesses in West Louisville;
- Transform vacant properties into affordable housing and create a path for Black ownership;
- Create significant educational support to close the achievement gap;
- Access mental health professionals to support those who are struggling with the stress, the trauma and the crushing demoralization of racism.

The Path Forward document calls for social workers to help police with societal issues that aren't, in fact, criminal. This was addressed in the settlement and we expect this work to grow.

The Path Forward also includes solutions for Jobs, Justice, Health, Housing and Education -- areas in which the Louisville Urban League has proven expertise and an infrastructure of established programs and partnerships that get results for real human beings, with human hearts, human minds, human faces, and human souls.

You can read the entire Path Forward Document [here](#). And we hope you will.

The Louisville Urban League calls on Louisville Metro to engage with this document, to reopen the budget to support the many organizations doing the good work in our city, and to move these initiatives forward.

Louisville needs a new narrative – and that narrative must tell the story of a city where everyone can flourish in our multiethnic, multiracial, multireligious community.

Our downtown, and our hearts, have been boarded up for too long. It is time now to reopen our city, our hearts and our minds. The dividing walls of hostility must now come down, so we can walk -- abreast -- into a better community that champions justice for all. Let us move forward together. We cannot let this moment pass.

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