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Everytown for Gun Safety Applauds Justice in Policing Act

NEW YORK -- Everytown for Gun Safety and its grassroots networks, Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action, released the following statements on the unveiling of the Justice in Policing Act (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/1gd1nk>) by House and Senate Democrats, led by Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA), Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus; Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ); Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA); and Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-NY), Chair of the House Judiciary Committee.

"Throughout our nation's history, Black people in America have been disproportionately impacted by violence at the hands of law enforcement, and that violence is often perpetrated with a gun," said **John Feinblatt, president of Everytown for Gun Safety**. "Combating racism and white supremacy will require wholesale changes to our laws and our culture, but this bill is a strong step toward creating a fairer and safer future for people of color. We applaud Congressional Democrats for honoring the memory of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many other victims of police brutality by demanding action."

"This bill is a crucial step on a long journey toward fundamentally transforming the role police play in our society, and ending the centuries of police violence Black and brown people in America have suffered," said **Shannon Watts, founder of Moms Demand Action**. "We applaud Congressional Democrats for introducing it, and Moms Demand Action volunteers are committed to doing everything we can to help this bill become law."

(<https://everytown.org/>)

“Since the day my ancestors were stolen from their homes and brought to America, there have been little to no consequences in this country for killing Black men, women, and children—especially for police officers. That’s why George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many other Black people in America are dead today,” said **Pastor Jackie Jackson, a member of the Everytown Survivor Network from Ohio**. “This bill is long overdue, but it is a historic step toward finally creating an America where Black lives matter and Black people achieve justice. I applaud Congressional Democrats for stepping up and getting it done.”

This bill (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/h9d1nk>) would take several necessary steps to address police brutality, racial profiling, and other fundamental problems in our law enforcement system. These critical measures include:

- Improving the use of force standard for federal officers so that force may be used only when absolutely necessary, and pressuring state and local actors to do the same (using federal grant money);
- Banning the use of chokeholds and carotid holds for federal officers, requiring federal officers to intervene when other officers use excessive force, and pressuring state and local actors to do the same;
- Requiring training for federal officers on de-escalation, implicit bias, and procedural justice, and pressuring state and local actors to do the same;
- Limiting the transfers of military-style equipment to state and local law enforcement;
- Creating a national police misconduct registry, with information about misconduct, discipline, and terminations;
- Empowering state attorneys general to investigate and intervene when local police departments have a pattern or practice of abuse and discrimination under federal law, and creating a grant program for independent state investigations;
- Updating the criminal police misconduct statute to make it easier to prosecute law officers who kill civilians, and enabling people injured or killed by law enforcement to protect their constitutional rights in court;
- Require federal officers to wear body cameras, and requiring state and local law enforcement to use existing federal funds to

- Collecting data on federal law enforcement actions, and pressuring state and local agencies to report use of force incidents to the federal government; and
- Creating anti-lynching provisions, including provisions that make it a federal crime to conspire to violate existing hate crimes laws.

The introduction of this bill comes after several historic weeks of protests—led in part by key groups such as the Movement for Black Lives, Minnesota Freedom Fund, Reclaim the Block, Campaign Zero, the Center for Policing Equity, the Community Justice Action Fund, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and more—which began in Minnesota and spread to cities across the nation. The protests started after the killing of George Floyd, a father of two, by a white Minneapolis police officer who kept his knee on Floyd's neck (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/x1e1nk>) for more than eight minutes while Floyd cried out that he couldn't breathe. Floyd was pinned down to the pavement — while handcuffed — outside of a market where employees had called police about a counterfeit bill. In many cases, the protests have been met with further incidents (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/duf1nk>) of police brutality across America.

George Floyd is one of several Black people who have died in recent weeks in incidents of racism and gun violence: among others, on February 23, Ahmaud Arbery (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/tmg1nk>) was killed by two white men in Georgia while he was out on a run. There have also been multiple fatal police shootings: on May 6, a 21-year-old Black man named Sean Reed was fatally shot (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/9eh1nk>) by Indianapolis police, and on March 13, Breonna Taylor (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/p7h1nk>) was (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/5zi1nk>) fatally shot by Louisville police. Breonna Taylor's killers have not been arrested.

As we mourn for the people whose stories have become well-known, we also know that there are countless similar stories that haven't made the news. Black Americans are 10 times more likely (<https://t.e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/ljs1nk>) than white Americans to die by gun homicide and Black children and teens are 14 times more likely than their white peers to die by gun homicide. And according to Mapping Police Violence

(https://everytown.org/press/e2ma.net/click/dqk6nd/5zi5icc/1kk1nk), Black Americans account for only 13 percent of the population but are 3x more likely to be killed by police than white people.

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