



TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES:

We are a group of civil rights organizations, elected officials, faith leaders, academics, public defenders, and community led organizers who are writing to ask you to take immediate action to heal our American cities. As county leaders, you hold unique power to set the agenda for your counties. More importantly, however, now is the time to enact real change so that we can begin rebuilding our country into places where all people feel safe.

The current protests across the nation—in the aftermath of the killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and Tony McDade—are just the latest signs of racism and of the all-too-apparent crisis in policing in America. But it would be a mistake to focus on policing as an institution, and then to contemplate the reforms to the profession that could be made. We've made that mistake before.

Eric Garner. Michael Brown. Laquan McDonald. Sandra Bland. Jessica Williams. These police killings six years ago sparked protests across the country and birthed the Black Lives Matter movement and flood of reform efforts. Six years later, though, not enough has changed. More police killings, more protests.

The solutions we need right now both to protect our safety and to rescue our democracy are ones that meet the scale of the problem. To respond to George Floyd's death, or Breonna Taylor's death, we must replace the questions about how to reform policing with questions about what a broader vision for safety and justice in America should look like and what role policing should play in it.

We are at a point in our history when the global pandemic has precipitated the highest unemployment levels since the Great Depression, left tens of millions of Americans unable to pay rent or their mortgage, and exposed how a lack of universal health care jeopardizes the health and safety not only the uninsured but all of us as a virus spreads through communities. More people have died in New York City alone from the coronavirus since April than all of the people in the state of New York that died by homicide in the past two decades combined. As with the policing crisis and so many problems in our country, even this virus has punished Black and brown communities more harshly.

This is a time when we need to ask ourselves what public safety means and whether our laws and our budgets reflect those priorities. Any clear-eyed assessment will produce a resounding no in response.

So, today our solutions must change the ways our communities work by shrinking the police footprint in our country—and by investing the savings in areas that truly will make us safer. Here are some specific ideas to start with, but these are just a few among many:

- ▶ **Fix Local Budgets.** Law enforcement budgets have ballooned so much that in many counties across the country policing and jailing people gobbles up 40% or more of the county budget. Even small changes in budgets can mean large changes for other

departments. For example, in many counties, a 5% cut in sheriff budgets would allow counties to double their spending on social services or public health. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, unemployment levels are higher than at any point since the Great Depression, hundreds of thousands of people are at risk of losing their homes, and frontline workers do not have the equipment they need to do their jobs and protect themselves. Now more than ever, we need to invest in the services that will make our communities safe and healthy instead of funding law enforcement at the expense of these other vital functions.

► **Get The Right Experts Responding To The Right Problems.**

- **Shift most first-responder responsibilities away from traditional law enforcement agencies because most problems arising from substance use disorders, mental health diagnoses, and poverty require medical professionals and social workers, not criminal enforcement or armed officers.** Law enforcement officers are not trained and equipped to be experts in responding to mental health crises. We shouldn't send armed law enforcement to respond to a mental health crisis any more than we'd send a social worker to respond to a burglary in progress.
- **Diversify violence prevention resources by shifting dollars from police budgets to violence interruptions programs.** Public safety budgets reflect a belief that law enforcement is the primary way to reduce violence, in large part because police officers solve serious crimes like homicides. However, clearance rates for homicides are near or at all time lows in cities across the country. We need to invest resources in a public health approach to violence prevention that stops fatal violence before it occurs and stops its spread by interrupting ongoing conflicts, working with community members at the highest risk to change behavior related to violence and community norms. Under the Cure Violence model, for example, violence is seen as a contagious problem that is transmitted through exposure that can be effectively treated and prevented using health methods.

► **Stop The Militarization Of The Police:**

- **End no knock warrants and violent, military style raids.** No knock warrants are dangerous and unnecessary, and they should be banned to protect both officers and the communities they serve. When law enforcement uses force to enter into homes unannounced, people believe their home is being broken into and often defend themselves, leading to civilian and officer deaths. Any forced entry into a home, especially at night, should be banned in all but the most extreme cases, and measures should be adopted to deter/sanction violations of restrictions on forced entry into homes.
- **Restrict the flow of military equipment to local law enforcement.** Policing has changed since we started the war on drugs; police are now armed with weapons and equipment that were designed to be used again against warring countries. Instead,

law enforcement are using those weapons in their own communities. The equipment is dangerous, dehumanizing, and unnecessary for officer safety. If anything, it escalates the situation.

- **Ban the use of military equipment and tactics on protestors.** In the last few days, we have seen pictures of protestors who have lost their eyes after being shot by rubber bullets, elected officials peacefully protesting who have been tear-gassed, and grieving community members coming face to face with police officers in riot gear. The goal of the police during times of unrest should be to allow peaceful protests, and to take any/all measures necessary to avoid a violent confrontation between the police and protestors. To achieve that goal, all military equipment and tactics must be banned.

► **Curtail The Corrosive Power of Police Unions:**

- **Make police contracts and the negotiations around them public and open to community comment.** The police have long used the contract process to enlarge their budgets, often behind closed doors. Instead, the process of asking for more money for the police should be done openly, and the public should be aware that when money is given to the police for more police officers, it may mean that a mental health center or a food bank will lose funding. When the process is out in the open, it means that the police will also have to justify their requests and produce data shows that things like enlarging the police force or procuring military equipment is linked to public safety.
- **Pledge to refuse political donations from law enforcement unions, associations, and political action committees.** The police unions are one of the few agencies that works directly with/for elected officials yet is able to give individual campaign donations. When these same elected officials are charged with deciding the police budget, or whether to replace a police chief, or whether a police officer has lied in court, the giving of campaign donations tarnishes the relationship and causes the public to lose trust in the process. All elected officials should refuse political donations from any law enforcement union, association, or PAC, and officials who have received donations should return it.

SIGNED

LINDSAY N. SABADOSA

*1st Hampshire District State Representative
Massachusetts House of Representatives*

REV. JAY LEACH

Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte

CHAS MOORE

*Executive Director
Austin Justice Coalition*

KARMA LEKSHE TSOMO

*Professor
University of San Diego*

REV. DR. MARVIN M ELLISON

Religious Coalition Against Discrimination

MARK SMITH

*Helena Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis
Princeton Theological Seminary*

JOANNE D'ARCANGELO

*Owner
JD'A Consulting, Inc.*

ALEX BUNIN

*Chief Public Defender
Harris County Public Defender's Office*

ANNE UNDERWOOD

Mediator/Lawyer/Ethics Counsel

SIGNED

MICHAEL YOUNG

Chief Public Defender
Bexar County Public Defender's
Office

GREGORY R. JARRELL

Co-Founder
QC Family Tree

EVE STEVENS

Minister
Unitarian Universalist Church
of Charlotte

MEREDITH JORDAN

Founder and Facilitator
The Living Spiritual Elders
Project

ALEX ROAN

Founder
MaineTransNet (Marine
Transgender Network)

SUSAN TALVE

Founding Rabbi
Central Reform Congregation

HUSSEIN RASHID

Adjunct Faculty
Columbia University, Department
of Religion

ZAYN KASSAM

*John Knox McLean Professor
of Religious Studies*
Pomona College, Claremont,
California

LEE KOVARSKY

Professor of Law
University of Maryland Francis
King Carey School of Law

RUTH BUFFALO

*District 27 State House
Representative*
North Dakota House of
Representatives

CYRUS O'BRIEN

Postdoctoral Research Associate
Washington University
in St. Louis

STEPHEN HARPER

Clinical Law Professor
Florida International University
College of Law

CHARLES PRESS

Clinical Professor
University of Texas School
of Law

ALEX S. VITALE

Coordinator
Policing and Social Justice Project,
Brooklyn College

THEA POSEL

Professor of Law and Social Work
University of Texas School
of Law

SHEENA JOHNSON

*Vice President of Programs
& Partnerships*
Organize Florida

KATIE TINTO

Clinical Professor of Law
University of California Irvine
School of Law

MARIE MAZZONE

Bend the Arc

KRISTINE CHONG

Chaplain

LEX STEPLING

*Director of Campaigns
and Policy*
Dignity & Power Now

ALIZA B. KAPLAN

Professor
Lewis & Clark Law School

SHARMIN HOSSAIN

Digital Security Trainer
Equality Labs

DAVID HARRIS

*Managing Director of the Charles
Hamilton Houston Institute for
Race and Justice*
Harvard Law School

EMILY LANGOWITZ

Rabbi
Temple Solel

WAYNE SANDHOLTZ

*John A. McCone Chair in
International Relations and
Professor of International Relations
and Law*
University of Southern California

ARIELA GROSS

*John B. & Alice R. Sharp Professor of
Law & History*
University of Southern California
Gould School of Law

KATHRYN DYER

Clinical Professor
University of Texas School
of Law

ARMEN MERJANIAN

Attorney

EUNISSES HERNANDEZ

Executive Director
La Defensa

LISA SCHREIBERSDORF

Executive Director
Brooklyn Defender Services

MERCEDES MONTAGNES

Executive Director
Promise of Justice

JERRY ADER

Public Defender
Genesee County Public Defender,
NY

NANCY HURLBERT

Chair
Lake County Democratic Party, FL

TIAWANA BROWN

Founder
Beauty after the Bars

KIM TAYLOR-THOMPSON

Professor of Clinical Law
New York University School
of Law

CARRIE BLEAKLEY

Conflict Defender
Ontario County, NY

DEBORAH AHRENS

Associate Professor of Law
Seattle University School
of Law

KAMERON D. JOHNSON

Juvenile Public Defender
Travis County Juvenile Public
Defender's Office, TX

DAVID LEE

President
Texas Signal

STEVEN GREENWALD, ESQ.

Chief Public Defender
Luzerne County Public Defender's
Office, PA

BREANNA DIAZ

Policy Director
Positive Women's
Network-USA

LUPA MARLENE BRANDT

Community Outreach Coordinator
TRANScending Barriers Atlanta

JONATHAN SIMON

Professor of Law
University of California Berkeley
School of Law

DAVID JOHNS

Executive Director
National Black Justice Coalition

SUZANNE A. LUBAN

*Clinical Supervising Attorney and
Lecturer in Law, Criminal Defense
Clinic*
Stanford Law School

ZAKIYA SANKARA-JABAR

Co-Founder
Racial Justice NOW!

MOHAMMED MISSOURI

Executive Director
Jetpac (Justice Education
Technology Political Advocacy
Center)

ROB KAHN

Professor of Law
University of St. Thomas,
Minneapolis

SIGNED

DAVID CAICEDO

*Florida Student Power Network
Co-Director
Organize Florida*

AZIZ RANA

*Professor of Law
Cornell Law School*

CYNTHIA GODSOE

*Professor of Law
Brooklyn Law School*

RONALD TYLER

*Professor of Law
Stanford Law School*

STEPHANIE KOLLMANN

*Policy Director of the Children and
Family Justice Center
Northwestern University Pritzker
School of Law*

REVEREND JEN BAILEY

*Founder and Executive Director
Faith Matters Network*

LESLIE ROSE

*Professor Emerita
Golden Gate University*

IAN STRINGHAM

*Executive Director
California Legal Research*

HEATHER VARANINI

*Associate Director of Academic
Achievement and Adjunct Professor
Golden Gate University School
of Law*

ERIC MILLER

*Professor of Law and Leo
J. O'Brien Fellow
Loyola Law School at Loyola
Marymount University*

AMBROSIO SILVA

*Assistant Public Defender
Travis County Juvenile Public
Defender's Office*

TANYA M. WASHINGTON

*Professor of Law
Georgia State University College
of Law*

ANNALISE BUTH

*MR Bauer Fellow in Dispute
Resolution at the Center on
Negotiation and Mediation, Bluhm
Legal Clinic
Northwestern Pritzker School
of Law*

KATE MOGULESCU

*Assistant Professor of
Clinical Law
Brooklyn Law School*

KAREN BAKER-FLETCHER

*Professor of Systematic Theology
Southern Methodist University
Perkins School of Theology*

KATE D'ADAMO

*Partner
Reframe Health and Justice*

PATTY BERGER

*Local Organizer
All of Us or None - St. Louis Chapter*

TIM BLACK

*CAHOOTS Operations Coordinator
White Bird Clinic*

OLIVIA BENNETT

*District 13 Council Representative
Allegheny County Council, PA*

JOHANNA MUSTAFA

*Steering Committee Member
Yalla Indivisible*

BETHANY HALLAM

*At Large Council Representative
Allegheny County Council, PA*

REV. VALERIE MANSFIELD

*Senior Minister
Unity of Louisville, Inc.*

NORMAN SOLOMON

*Co-Founder and National Director
RootsAction*

CASSANDRA BENSABIH

*Senior Organizer
Massachusetts Against Solitary
Confinement*

ANGELA DAVIS

*Professor of Law
American University's Washington
College of Law*

MARY PAT TREUTHART

*Professor
Gonzaga University School
of Law*

ISABELLE GUNNING

*Professor of Law
Southwestern Law School*

AMY JACKS DEAN

*Co-Pastor
Park Road Baptist*

RUSS DEAN

*Co-Pastor
Park Road Baptist*

BENJAMIN DAVIS

*Professor of Law
University of Toledo College of Law*

ANITA PRIZIO

*District 3 Council Representative
Allegheny County Council, PA*

ISSA KOHLER-HAUSMANN

*Professor of Law
Yale Law School*

MACARENA SAEZ

*Director of the Center for Human
Rights & Humanitarian Law
American University Washington
College of Law*

MARTÍN QUEZADA

*State Senator
District 29, AZ*

MEDELLIN HUGO

Catholic Priest, Reverend, Father

NICOLE MORRIS

*Professor in Practice
Emory University School
of Law*

REBECCA HAMILTON

*Associate Professor of Law
American University Washington
College of Law*

DONNA HYLTON

*Author of "A Little Piece
Of Light"*

NIKOLAS GUGGENBERGER

*Executive Director of the Yale
Information Society Project
Yale Law School*

MARGARET BARRY

*Visiting Professor of Law
American University Washington
College of Law*

JESSICA L. MILLWARD

*Practitioner-in-Residence
American University Washington
College of Law*

MARITZA PEREZ

*Director of National Affairs
Drug Policy Alliance*

ADNAN ZULFIQAR

*Associate Professor of Law
Rutgers Law School*

MICHELLE PHELPS

*Associate Professor of Sociology
University of Minnesota*

DAVID HUNTER

*Professor of Law
American University Washington
College of Law*

SYLVIA LETT

*Assoc. Prof. of Legal Writing
University of Arizona James
E. Rogers College of Law*

NADIA AHMAD

*Associate Professor of Law
Barry University School of Law*

ALICIA VIRANI

*Criminal Justice Program
UCLA School of Law*

NICK RATHOD

*President
Virginia Peoples PAC*

NANCY E. ALLISON

*Pastor
United Church of Christ*

SIGNED

IVETTE ALÉ

Senior Policy Lead at Dignity and Power Now
Coordinator of JusticeLA Coalition

DEANNA HOSKINS

President
JustLeadershipUSA

W. DAVID BALL

Associate Professor
Santa Clara University School of Law

LINDSAY JARRELL BLOUIN

Deputy Chief
Baton Rouge Office of the Public Defender, LA

ELLEN KREITZBERG

Professor of Law
Santa Clara University School of Law

DEIRDRE FULLER

Chief Public Defender
Rapides Parish Public Defender, LA

ANAND SUBRAMANIAN

Managing Director
PolicyLink

SAMANTHA BUCKINGHAM

Clinical Professor and Director of the Juvenile Justice Clinic
Loyola Law School at Loyola Marymount University

MONA LYNCH

Professor of Criminology, Law and Society and Law
University of California, Irvine

LYDIA KIVES

Senior Staff Attorney
The Bail Project

NIELS FRENZEN

Sydney and Audrey Irmas Endowed
Clinical Professor of Law
University of Southern California Gould School of Law

CRAIG KONNOTH

Associate Professor Law
University of Colorado School of Law

BRIAN GARCIA

Vice President
Tempe Union High School District

FAWN WALKER-MONTGOMERY

Co-Founder and Executive Director
Take Action Mon Valley

COLLEEN SHANAHAN

Associate Clinical Professor of Law
Columbia Law School

TRISHA WARD

13th Judicial District Public Defender

RANJANA NATARAJAN

Clinical Professor
University of Texas School of Law

ALTHEA SPENCER MILLER

Professor
Drew Theological School

BENNETT CAPERS

Professor of Law and Director of the Center of Race, Law, and Justice
Fordham University School of Law

SUE UDRY

Executive Director
Defending Rights & Dissent

JESSICA DIXON WEAVER

Associate Professor
Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law

JOSEPH PILERI

Practitioner in Residence
American University Washington College of Law

VINCENT SOUTHERLAND

Executive Director of the Center on Race, Inequality, and the Law
New York University School of Law

JOBETH HAMON

Ward 6 Councilwoman
Oklahoma City City Council

KAHLIL SEREN

Vice Mayor
City of Cleveland Heights, OH

CHASE FOSTER

Rabbi for Engagement and Learning
jHUB

JANET F. KORN

Sister of Mercy
Sisters of Mercy Community of New York Pennsylvania West

VALERIE TRAUB

Adrienne Rich Distinguished
Professor of English & Women's Studies and Frederick G. L. Huetwell Professor of English and Women's Studies
University Of Michigan

ALVIN BRAGG

Visiting Professor and Co-Director of the Racial Justice Project
New York Law School

MARYANN SCALI

Executive Director
National Juvenile Defender Center

MAGGIE LEBLANC

District Defender of 16th Judicial District Public Defenders' Office, LA

IBRAHEEM S. SAMIRAH

86th District Delegate Member
Virginia House of Delegates

DAN SIMON

Professor of Law & Psychology
University of Southern California

TAMAR BIRCKHEAD

Attorney

SONG RICHARDSON

Dean
University of California Irvine School of Law

EMILIE TOWNES

Dean
Vanderbilt University Divinity School

JODY ARMOUR

Roy P. Crocker Professor of Law
University of Southern California Gould School of Law

ALISON MIKKOR

Assistant Professor of Lawyering Skills
University of California Irvine School of Law

STEVEN ZEIDMAN

Professor
City University of New York School of Law

BARBARA GREEN

Church of the Assumption,
Fairport, NY

DAVID L. WALLACE

36th Judicial District Chief Public Defender, LA

ENID TRUCIOS-HAYNES

Professor of Law
University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law

CAITLIN CLERKIN

David and Mary Hunting Graduate Fellow at the Institute for the Humanities
University of Michigan

HENRY WEINSTEIN

Professor of Law
University of California Irvine School of Law

DAYLIN LEACH

District 17 State Senator
Pennsylvania State Senate

SARA JACOBSON

Associate Professor of Law and Director of Trial Advocacy
Temple University School of Law

CLAUDIA MUNOZ

Interim Executive Co-Director
Grassroots Leadership

ROSEMARY B. MCNATT

President
Starr King School for the Ministry

SIGNED

CHARLES S. BOBIS

Professor of Law (Ret.)
St. John's University School
of Law

MICHELLE OBERMAN

*Katharine and George Alexander
Professor of Law*
Santa Clara University School of
Law

LESLIE CREDLE

Founder and Director
Justice For Housing

MICHAEL HARRIS

Pastor

KEVIN BIRD

President
Michigan State University Graduate
Employees Union - AFT Local 6196

COLLEEN CHIEN

Professor
Santa Clara University School
of Law

MIKE SYLVESTER

District 39 State Representative
Maine House of Representatives

EMILY SHETTY

District 18 Delegate
Maryland House of Delegates

KATHERYN RUSSELL-BROWN

*Professor, Levin, Mabie, and Levin
Professor and Director for the
Center for the Study of Race and
Race Relations*
University of Florida Levin College
of Law

TSEMING YANG

*Professor of Law and Director of the
Center for Global Law and Policy*
Santa Clara University School
of Law

THEA SEBASTIAN

Policy Counsel
Civil Rights Corps

KATHLEEN KIM

Professor of Law
Loyola Law School at Loyola
Marymount University

AARON KOLLER

Professor
Yeshiva University

MATIANGAI SIRLEAF

Associate Professor of Law
University of Pittsburgh School
of Law

VANESSA SPINAZOLA

Executive Director
Justice & Accountability Center
of Louisiana

MARK MCLAUGHLIN

President
Computer Forensics International

MICHAEL MELTSNER

Professor of Law
Northeastern University School
of Law

LIYAH BROWN

*Director of Criminal Injustice
Reform*
Texas Civil Rights Project

GABRIEL J. CHIN

Edward L. Barrett Jr. Chair
University of California, Davis
School of Law

EZAK PEREZ

Director of Programs
Gender Justice LA

JEFF HOROWITZ

Professor
University of Michigan

PRIYA BASKARAN

Assistant Professor
Washington College of Law

DARRYL C. WILSON

Associate Dean & Professor of Law
Stetson University College of Law

DWAYNE KWAYSEE WRIGHT

Visiting Assistant Professor
George Washington University

LAURA RILEY

Director of Experiential Learning
USC Gould School of Law

BINNY MILLER

*Professor of Law and Co-Director,
Criminal Justice Clinic*
American University Washington
College of Law

DANIEL MEDWED

University Distinguished Professor
Northeastern University

MONA CADENA

*Director of Campaigns and
Organizing*
Equal Justice USA

**TABITHA ST. BERNARD-
JACOBS**

Organizer
Women's March

AMANDA WOOG

Executive Director
Texas Fair Defense Project

LINDSEY HORTENSTINE

*Director of Communications and
Development*
Orleans Public Defenders

RUSSELL GABRIEL

Clinical Professor
University of Georgia Law School

MAHNOOR HUSSAIN

Policy Associate
South Asian Americans Leading
Together

JUSTIN LEVINSON

Professor of Law
University of Hawaii

JULES EPSTEIN

Professor
Temple University

SUSAN CARLE

Professor
American University Washington
College of Law

JOY BLACKWOOD

Director of DC Strategy
People's Action

SHARON MCGOWAN

Legal Director
Lambda Legal

KATIE KRONICK

Practitioner in Residence
American University Washington
College of Law

MICHAEL CARROLL

Professor of Law
American University of Washington
College of Law

JAMES MACLEOD

Assistant Professor
Brooklyn Law School

SHIRLEY LIN

Acting Assistant Professor
New York University School
of Law

KUMAR RAO

Director, Justice Transformation
Center for Popular Democracy

SAKIRA COOK

Director, Justice Reform Program
The Leadership Conference of Civil
and Human Rights

PATRISSE CULLORS

*Political strategist, Co-founder of
Black Lives Matter & Founder of
Reform LA Jails*

MARIA RODRIGUEZ

Executive Director
Florida Immigrant Coalition

VAUGHN STEWART

Delegate
Maryland House of Delegates

DAN MCCLINTOCK

Minister of Mission and Family Life
Park Road Baptist Church

JACQUELINE HIDALGO

*Associate Professor of Latina/o/x
Studies and Religion*
Williams College

CHESA BOUDIN

San Francisco District Attorney

BRANT T LEE

Professor of Law
University of Akron School of Law

JULIA SALAZAR

State Senator
New York State, District 18

MELINA ABDULLAH

Professor, Pan African Studies
at California State University
Los Angeles and *Co-Founder*
Black Lives Matter-LA

ZACH NORRIS

Executive Director
Ella Baker Center for
Human Rights

KATIE EYER

Professor of Law
Rutgers Law School

CAROL ANNE LAWLER

Reverend

TAREK MAASSARANI

Founding Coordinator
DC Alliance for Restorative
Practices

AARON LITTMAN

Binder Clinical Teaching Fellow
UCLA School of Law

CHANTAL COUDOUX

Co-Director
Success Stories Program

ELLA BOURLAND

Journalist

DENI MACK

Founding Member
RocACTS

KELLYANN MORGAN

Institutional Advancement
Teachers College

STACEY RUTLAND

Founder
Income Movement

INGRID WALDRON

Professor
University of Pennsylvania

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI

State Senator
New York State, District 34

KRISTEN BELL

Assistant Professor
University of Oregon School of Law

WILLIAM NEUHEISEL

Human Rights & Civil
Liberties Advocate
ExposeFacts

EMILY TIMM

Co-Executive Director
Workers Defense Project