



LWVNYC Statement on Police Violence issued June 4, 2020

We're sure that you join us in our sorrow and anger at the killings of George Floyd, David McAtee and other Black people by the police across the US and within NYC.

Black people in this country and city continue to be targets of police violence. As an organization dedicated to the rights of voters and defending our democracy, we must take action to dismantle the systemic racism that pervades our culture and its structures. We cannot be truly democratic if Black people and other communities of color are denied justice and barred from full civic participation.

In a powerful statement earlier this week, our national organization, LWVUS, proclaimed, "The League acknowledges, painfully, that America is a nation founded on racism. Therefore, all who live in this country must contribute to and participate in organizations actively working to achieve full liberation and inclusive freedom. We must all advocate for anti-racist policies at every level of government."

Democracy is not a spectator sport. We encourage you to join us in supporting community organizations at the forefront of helping New Yorkers who are fighting these injustices, such as the [Brooklyn Community Bail Fund](#) and [Communities United for Police Reform](#). While we cannot bring back George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, David McAtee, Eric Garner, Sean Bell, Amadou Diallo, and the countless other Black people who have been killed by police officers, we can help their families get the justice they deserve. We must hold our city government accountable to ensure that not one more life is taken by the NYPD. To our white members and volunteers, we must examine our privilege, [delve deeper](#), hold each other accountable, and commit to an anti-racist framework in all our League activities. We must do the work to demonstrate loud and clear: Black Lives Matter.

There are many ways to take further action!

Action Item 1

The LWVNYC supports the repeal of Section 50-a of the New York Civil Rights Law. Repealing Section 50-a will provide the public with the transparency needed to hold the NYPD accountable. We encourage you to:

- Contact your [State Senator](#) to urge them to support [S3695](#) and your [State Assembly](#) member to urge them to support [A09332](#), both of which would repeal Section 50-a.
- Contact [Governor Cuomo](#) to urge him to sign any bill repealing Section 50-a.

Action Item 2

We are also developing our position statements regarding two measures on the City Council agenda, and we urge you to contact your [City Council member](#) to advocate for these items:

- [Int. 1864-2020](#) to require the police department to publicly report statistics on bias-based profiling and
- Redirecting NYPD budget cuts to address systemic inequalities in our healthcare, housing, education, and transportation systems. New York City's [budget](#) is renewed on July 1st so June is the time to act!

Action Item 3

We urge you to contact [Mayor de Blasio](#) to demand the release of the results of disciplinary hearings against police officers, as was the practice of past mayors. This will go a long way to ensuring transparency and holding our city government and law enforcement agencies accountable.

And, of course, we will continue to work tirelessly to ensure the power of the vote.

Thank you.

Judith Berg, Zuha Jamil, Akyla Tomlinson
Co-Chairs, Committee on Criminal Justice Reform

Ruth S. Altman and Catherine T. Gray
Co-Presidents, LWVNYC