

Preserving Life and Liberty for All

August 23, 2014

By The National Black Caucus of State Legislators

A Proclamation

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) recognizes the agony, suffering, and outrage of communities of color across the country that have witnessed too many lives robbed;

WHEREAS, NBCSL members have children, relatives, friends, and neighbors who have been devastated by violence, and whose lives has been perceived by some as less valuable and less deserving of justice;

WHEREAS, NBCSL members advocate fully on behalf of their constituents not just because they believe their experiences but because they share them;

WHEREAS, NBCSL upholds the Constitutional rights of all Americans to assemble peacefully, speak freely, and remind others, including law enforcement, what their rights, in fact, are and what they and their compatriots have fought and died to secure;

WHEREAS, NBCSL demands the protection of those Constitutional rights and impresses upon the nation the importance of a clear and bright distinction between the role of local law enforcement, the militarization of local law enforcement, and of the United States military deployed on her own people;

WHEREAS, recent high-profile occurrences with local law enforcement officers nationwide should illuminate why law enforcement must be a part of the community and care for that community—why law enforcement must work toward community-centric, culturally appropriate crime-reduction strategies that not only reduce crime but create a generation of citizens who understand that they matter to them;

WHEREAS, NBCSL has called for and its members have established state commissions to address the needs of racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S.;

WHEREAS, NBCSL and its members have railed against laws, such as Shoot First/Stand Your Ground legislation, which purport to make people safer but actually contribute to tragic losses of life for young men of color;

WHEREAS, NBCSL has urged and its members have passed legislation prohibiting the use of racial profiling by state and local law enforcement officers and requiring cultural competency training;

WHEREAS, NBCSL has promoted and its members have used private criminal complaints to persuade judges to force District Attorneys to file appropriate charges in the cases of wrongful deaths in which suspects have not been held to account; and

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators will assemble December 10-13, 2014 in Dallas, Texas for its 38th Annual Legislative Conference to discuss public policy issues of import to African American and vulnerable communities, and to the nation as a whole.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) will decide as a body on the course of action to take upon entering legislative sessions in 2015 and set a common agenda with regard to what measures should occur at the state and federal level to protect life and liberty in the United States for ALL of her inhabitants;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL members will enlist input from their constituents to ensure the action plan emanates from the will of the people, so that the constituents' voices speak through legislation that will guide their communities' authorities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all ratified resolutions will be disseminated after the Annual Legislative Conference to the President and Vice President of the United States, relevant Congressional leaders and committee chairs, state government agencies, and national stakeholders.



State Representative Joe Armstrong (TN)
President, National Black Caucus of State Legislators

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