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Andre Hill's Death at the Hands of a Columbus, Ohio Police Officer How Deadly 2020 Has Been for Black People in America

Washington, D.C. – December 28, 2020 – The National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL)

Even the phrase “sick and tired of being sick and tired” is clichéd when it comes to expressing our outrage at yet another police killing of an unarmed black male. Rest assured however, that just like the bad apples in police departments across this country don't take a holiday or vacation, neither will NBCSL Members' call for justice and accountability when an American citizen is murdered by police in our community. “The sheer level of police violence against persons of color in this country has created a national state of emergency and it seems that meaningful reform cannot come soon enough.” said South Carolina State Representative Gilda Cobb-Hunter, NBCSL President.

On December 22nd, just weeks before the end of a tumultuous 2020, Columbus, Ohio police officer Adam Coy shot 47-year-old Andre Hill, an unarmed black man, while responding to a non-emergency disturbance call from a neighbor about a vehicle running in the street off and on for an extended period of time. The reports indicate that Officer Coy fired the lethal shots killing Mr. Hill only seconds after making contact with him.

It was later confirmed that neither Officer Coy whose department service record includes eighty-nine (89) previous citizen complaints, nor his female colleague activated their body camera, a violation of Department protocol. Likewise, neither officer rendered aid to Mr. Hill but instead as Mr. Hill lay dying on the garage floor. Instead, the female officer requested an officer support unit for the shooter, Officer Coy. After reviewing a non-audio recording of the event, Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther concluded that the officers displayed a ‘stunning disregard for life.’ While NBCSL commends Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther's decision to immediately suspend and recommend the termination of Officer Coy, we can not sit idly by while officers like Coy ignore department policies and continue wreaking havoc on people of color.

“We remain at a critical juncture in our nation that requires us to examine any and all means to prevent further brutality and killing of black men, women, and children by police. The NBCSL Ethical Policing Work Group has created a framework that can help state and local leaders codify expectations and enshrine transparency and accountability in policing. We look forward to working with stakeholders at all levels to develop and implement a response that will effectively address this national emergency,” continued NBCSL President Gilda Cobb-Hunter.

The prayers and thoughts of our Members are with the Andre Hill family. We share your outrage and pain for your tragic loss.

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