

A RESOLUTION

23-430

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

June 9, 2020

To declare the existence of an emergency with respect to the need to provide for comprehensive policing and justice reform for District residents and visitors; and for other purposes.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2020”.

Sec. 2. (a) On March 13, 2020, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black woman, was killed by members of the Louisville Metro Police Department while she was sleeping in her home.

(b) On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was killed when a member of the Minneapolis Police Department pressed his knee into Mr. Floyd’s neck for almost 9 minutes while Mr. Floyd was handcuffed.

(c) On May 27, 2020, Tony McDade, a 38-year-old Black transgender man was shot and killed by a member of the Tallahassee Police Department.

(d) In the past 2 weeks, thousands of people in cities across the country, including the District, and around the world, have taken to the streets to protest injustice, racism, and police brutality against Black Americans. These First Amendment assemblies have given voice to deep anger and trauma engendered by acts of violence by the police against Black Americans and have energized a national movement around racism in policing, the use of force, lack of police accountability and transparency, and systemic racial injustice and inequity.

(e) The demonstrations have been met by threats by the President and acts of police violence against protestors. On June 1, 2020, on Lafayette Square outside of the White House, federal law enforcement used riot control agents, including pepper spray, smoke cannisters, and rubber bullets, on protestors who were peacefully exercising their First Amendment rights.

(f) The deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor – and of so many other Black Americans at the hands of the police – are interwoven with the legacy and evolution of slavery and generations of racial terror in this nation. Enduring systems of institutional racism continue in the over-policing, over-charging, and over-incarceration of Black Americans.

(g) Here at home, many District residents of color experience a conflicted and troubling relationship with law enforcement. The Metropolitan Police Department has had its own

instances of police killings of Black residents, including Jeffrey Price, D'Quan Young, Marquese Alston, and Terrence Sterling.

(h) Simultaneously, the District struggles with a global pandemic that has overwhelmingly impacted residents of color. Yet, despite serious risks to their health from COVID-19 and threats of violence against them by their own government, District residents are standing up for racial justice and demanding change.

(i) The Council must listen to the voices of District residents and act accordingly to bend the arc of justice. In this moment, silence and inaction in the area of policing and criminal justice reform would be equivalent to consent to the systems that allowed their deaths.

(j) This comprehensive emergency legislation enhances police accountability and transparency through the implementation of numerous reforms and best practices.

Sec. 3. The Council of the District of Columbia determines that the circumstances enumerated in section 2 constitute emergency circumstances making it necessary that the Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Emergency Amendment Act of 2020 be adopted after a single reading.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately.