

ACLU of Wisconsin: Issues statement after fatalities in Kenosha

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KENOSHA — The ACLU of Wisconsin issued a statement today after a night of violence erupted in Kenosha, after Kenosha Police shot 29-year-old Jacob Blake in the back seven times on Sunday.

Chris Ott, executive director of the ACLU of Wisconsin, said the following:

“We offer condolences for the two people who lost their lives last night, and the person who was severely injured, after they were apparently shot by an anti-Black Lives Matter vigilante during protests in Downtown Kenosha following the horrific police shooting of Jacob Blake. No one should lose their lives — whether at the hands of law enforcement or armed militias — for expressing their outrage, disappointment, exhaustion, or vision for a better future. Law enforcement must treat protesters and counterprotesters equally, regardless of viewpoint.

“Law enforcement should play no role in First Amendment contexts, unless it is to protect and enable the exercise of our constitutional and human rights to protest and to gather with others to make our voices heard.

“When law enforcement enters a community dressed in riot gear, spraying groups of protesters with tear gas, it engenders more instability and further traumatizes

people who are already grieving the unjust police shooting of yet another Black man.

The militarized response we've seen so far has exacerbated the situation in Kenosha, instead of deescalating it. President Trump's threat today to send federal law enforcement to Kenosha is misguided and will only make matters worse. We don't need more police, we need to end police violence.

"Kenosha doesn't need to see a repeat of Portland, where federal agents wreaked havoc and violently trampled on the constitutional rights of protesters. If the Administration wants to take action, it can end the Department of Defense 1033 program which gives military weapons to local police and suggests it's okay to treat communities like war zones and their residents like enemies."

This statement is available online at:

<https://www.aclu-wi.org/en/news/aclu-wisconsin-issues-statement-after-fatalities--kenosha>