

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins Senators Booker and Harris, Congressional Black Caucus in introducing the Justice in Policing Act of 2020

Posted on Monday, Jun 8, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Kamala Harris (D-CA), as well as Congressional Black Caucus Chair Karen Bass (D-CA) and House Judiciary Committee Chair Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), in introducing the *Justice in Policing Act of 2020*, the first-ever bold, comprehensive approach to hold police accountable, change the culture of law enforcement and build trust between law enforcement and our communities.

“The pain people are expressing through peaceful protests is real. I see it, I hear the calls for change and I know we have to work to heal the wounds of racism in our country. We can say liberty and justice for all, but we need to make sure everyone can live this value,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “We need federal reforms to improve police training and practices, and to ensure transparency and accountability. That’s why I’m joining Senators Cory Booker, Kamala Harris, and the Congressional Black Caucus to introduce this comprehensive reform to change the culture of policing in our communities. This is long overdue and we must meet this critical moment now to address systemic racism and fix policing policies in our country.”

“America has a serious and deadly problem when it comes to the discriminatory and excessive policing of communities of color – and that policing exists within a system that time and again refuses to hold police accountable for their brutality. For too long, this has been accepted as a cruel reality of being black in this country. We are

forced to figure out how to keep ourselves safe from law enforcement and we are viewed as a threat to be protected against instead of people worth protecting. And for too long, Congress has failed to act. That ends today with the landmark Justice in Policing Act which, for the first time in history, will take a comprehensive approach to ending police brutality. On the back-end, the bill fixes our federal laws so law enforcement officers are held accountable for egregious misconduct and police abuses are better tracked and reported. And on the front-end, the bill improves police practices and training to prevent these injustices from happening in the first place," **said Senator Booker.**

"America's sidewalks are stained with Black blood. In the wake of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor's murders, we must ask ourselves: how many more times must our families and our communities be put through the trauma of an unarmed Black man or woman's killing at the hands of the very police who are sworn to protect and serve them? As a career prosecutor and former Attorney General of California, I know that real public safety requires community trust and police accountability. I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing this historic legislation that will get our country on a path forward," **said Senator Harris.**

"What we are witnessing is the birth of a new movement in our country with thousands coming together in every state marching to demand a change that ends police brutality, holds police officers accountable, and calls for transparency. For over 100 years, Black communities in America have sadly been marching against police abuse and calling for the police to protect and serve them as they do others. Today we unveil the Justice in Policing Act, which will establish a bold transformative vision of policing in America. Never again should the world be subjected to witnessing what we saw on the streets in Minnesota with George Floyd," **said Congressional Black Caucus Chair Bass.**

"We have heard the terrifying words 'I can't breathe' from George Floyd, Eric Garner, and the millions of Americans in the streets calling out for change. For every incident of excessive force that makes headlines, the ugly truth is that there are countless others that we never hear about. This is a systemic problem that requires a comprehensive solution. I am proud to work in lockstep with the Congressional Black Caucus to craft the Justice in Policing Act. This bold, transformative legislation will finally ban chokeholds at the federal level and incentivize states to do the same, it will help end racial profiling, get weapons of

war off our streets, hold police accountable, increase transparency and require and encourage greater use of body cameras. It does all of this while ensuring that our law enforcement agencies adhere to the very highest standards in training, hiring and de-escalation strategies to address systemic racism and bias to change the culture of law enforcement in America and ultimately save lives. I hope to take up this legislation in the House Judiciary Committee in the coming weeks," **said House Judiciary Committee Chair Nadler.**

The Justice in Policing Act of 2020:

- Prohibits federal, state, and local law enforcement from racial, religious and discriminatory profiling, and mandates training on racial, religious, and discriminatory profiling for all law enforcement.
- Bans chokeholds, carotid holds and no-knock warrants at the federal level and limits the transfer of military-grade equipment to state and local law enforcement.
- Mandates the use of dashboard cameras and body cameras for federal offices and requires state and local law enforcement to use existing federal funds to ensure the use of police body cameras.
- Establishes a National Police Misconduct Registry to prevent problematic officers who are fired or leave an agency from moving to another jurisdiction without any accountability.
- Amends federal criminal statute from "willfulness" to a "recklessness" standard to successfully identify and prosecute police misconduct.
- Reforms qualified immunity so that individuals are not barred from recovering damages when police violate their constitutional rights.
- Establishes public safety innovation grants for community-based organizations to create local commissions and task forces to help communities to re-imagine and develop concrete, just and equitable public safety approaches.
- Creates law enforcement development and training programs to develop best practices and requires the creation of law enforcement accreditation standard recommendations based on President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

- Requires state and local law enforcement agencies to report use of force data, disaggregated by race, sex, disability, religion, and age.
- Improves the use of pattern and practice investigations at the federal level by granting the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division subpoena power and creates a grant program for state attorneys general to develop authority to conduct independent investigations into problematic police departments.
- Establishes a Department of Justice task force to coordinate the investigation, prosecution and enforcement efforts of federal, state and local governments in cases related to law enforcement misconduct.

In addition to Baldwin, Booker and Harris, co-sponsors of the *Justice in Policing Act of 2020* in the Senate are Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-NY), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Carper (D-DE), Bob Casey (D-PA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Tom Udall (D-NM), Mark Warner (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Ron Wyden (D-OR). The bill is supported by 166 members in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The *Justice in Policing Act of 2020* has the support of a broad coalition of civil rights organizations including: Demand Progress, Lawyers' Committee For Civil Rights Under Law, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, National Action Network, National African American Clergy Network, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP), Black Millennial Convention, and the National Urban League.

“The National African American Clergy Network supports the Justice in Policing Bill.

It affirms sacred scripture that everyone is created in the image of God and deserves to be protected by police sworn to value and safeguard all lives. Failure by police to uphold this sacred trust with Black Americans lives, requires systemic changes in policing nationwide,” **said Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner, Dr. Otis Moss, Jr., and Dr. T. DeWitt Smith, Jr., Co-Conveners of the National African American Clergy Network (NAACN).**

“It’s time to close the chapter on a dark era of unchecked police violence in our country that has wreaked havoc on African American families across the country. The Justice in Policing Act is historic and long overdue legislation that will put our country on a path to reform. This Act is responsive to many of the urgent demands being pressed for by our communities and by the people protesting for racial justice and equity across our nation. The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law commends the Congressional Black Caucus for their leadership on policing reform and this critical legislation, including Chair Karen Bass, Senator Cory Booker and Senator Kamala Harris,” **said Kristen Clarke, President and Executive Director of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.**

“Sometimes difficult circumstances present a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring about historic change,” **said Marc H. Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League.** “The brutal actions of police in George Floyd’s death in Minneapolis, along with botched execution of a no-knock warrant that killed Breonna Taylor in Louisville, and the brazen vigilante execution of Ahmaud Arbery in Glynn County, Georgia, have pushed the nation to the tipping point.”

“For the past four-plus centuries, Black people have continuously been made to endure unfair, unjust, and inhumane treatment in this country. We have been made to believe in that if we worked hard, never complained, and accepted what the world offered that would be enough. What the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless others have taught us is that obedience will never be enough; liberty and justice for all applies to everyone but us; and by us, we mean Black Americans, African Americans, Afro-Americans, or plainly put, Black people,” **said Waikinya J.S. Clanton, MBA, Black Millennial Convention.**

Full text of the legislation is available [here](#).

A section-by-section summary of the *Justice in Policing Act of 2020* is available [here](#).

A fact sheet on the *Justice in Policing Act of 2020* is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).

###

Attachments area