



Due to the hectic environment of the news cycle, we found it important to wait to release a statement in hopes actions would be taken. Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, Planned Parenthood, and For Our Future want to affirm our support and solidarity for Leaders of Kenosha due to events that transpired on April 25th, 2021 at the Kenosha County Public Safety Building. In light of Kenosha Police Department Officer Rusten Shesky returning to duty, local activists, clergy, and the Leaders Of Kenosha gathered outside the Public Safety Building to make it known that many community members do not feel “served...with respect, fairness, and compassion” in accordance to the Kenosha Police Department’s mission while Shesky is still on the force.

Despite their presence being completely peaceful, organized, and safe, three individuals were arrested and taken into custody. They were Justin Blake, Jacob Blake’s uncle, Pastor Jonathan Barker from Grace Lutheran church, and activist Joe Cardinali. Our three organizations find these developments troubling, that three community members who were peacefully demonstrating were arrested while Officer Shesky who shot an unarmed man seven times in the back, and also lost his service weapon while on leave has not been, and has since returned to work. It has been even more disappointing that this crucial moment in our community has been met with deafening silence from not only the Mayor but by those serving on the city council. We call on the Alderpeople serving on the Police and Fire Commission, Mayor Antamaranian, and the Kenosha Police Department to remove Officer Rusten Shesky from duty, but to also begin the process of rebuilding trust within the community. That can happen through transparency, and community input on the hiring of a new police chief for the city of Kenosha.

