

The Black Elected Officials of Baton Rouge

Response to Recent Events in the City

IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

July 11, 2016

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Official Statement

In the wake of the deaths of Alton Sterling, Philando Castille, and the Dallas Police Officers, we, the Black Elected Officials of the City of East Baton Rouge stand with the Nation in an outcry for justice as well as with The Sterling family and our local citizens. We are sensitive to the public mourning and outrage that has resulted. Our steadfast and continuous goal as leaders is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens. We remain diligent in the pursuit for justice; to end racial division; and to end police brutality, when and where it may exist. We are proud of our citizens' desire to unify, mobilize, and to exercise nonviolent and peaceful civil disobedience. We are against any form of racial insight, derogatory language, violence against law enforcement, and criminal behavior from citizens and out of state individuals or groups. We urge local, state, and federal law enforcement to exercise restraint and to adhere to all standard operating procedures when engaging protesters. We urge our community to understand this is a process, but we are committed to keeping you informed of this case as it evolves. We openly invite all of our colleagues to help during this process by joining in the conversation and actively holding all City, State, and Federal agencies accountable by demanding a thorough and swift investigation. We remind our community to effectively make change by engaging in the political process through being an active voter.

Our most urgent response will be to set up a Community Command Center at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center on 4000 Gus Young as a safe haven and resource center for the community. This center will be open to the public to express their concerns verbally, in writing, in artwork, and to speak with licensed counselors, legal professionals, ministers, and community organizers. This location will also be a designated site for donations of water and snacks, and to circulate notices of community events. It will open on Monday, July 11, 2016 from 9am -8pm.

Lastly, In the vein of unity, we ask that on the date of Mr. Sterling's funeral that all activities, including protest and rallies, cease out of respect for his family.

Recusal of District Attorney Hillar Moore

Now that District Attorney Hillar Moore has recused himself in the investigation of the murder of Alton Sterling, the responsibility for appointing a prosecutor falls on Attorney General Jeff Landry.

We officially request that Attorney General Landry will consult with us in appointing a qualified, experienced and independent prosecutor.

Alton Sterling and the people of Baton Rouge deserve nothing less than the open and honest handling of this case.

Message to Local Law Enforcement Leadership

As a group, we have called a meeting with Local Law Enforcement Leadership today to address the recent interactions with law enforcement and the City of Baton Rouge. We are seeking the following resolve:

1. That law enforcement refrain from exercising behavior that provokes the community as they protest, march, or hold community events. Specifically, refrain from verbal or physical taunting and use of tactical force;
2. That law enforcement charge individuals through municipal statutes for misdemeanor offenses and utilize the City Court En Banc Order for preset bonds;
3. That law enforcement refrain from transporting individuals that have been arrested as a result to protests to outside Prison Facilities; and use the City Parish Jail located downtown.