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## **More Than 75 Criminal Justice Leaders Demand Transparency and Balance from Presidential Commission Examining Policing and Criminal Justice**

*At a Time When Policing Policy Is of Critical Significance, Amicus Brief Argues Commission Process Lacks Integrity, Undermines Community Trust and Violates Federal Law*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, a group of current and former law enforcement leaders from around the nation filed an [amicus curiae brief](#) in a lawsuit challenging the legality of the flawed process and skewed membership of the Presidential Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. The brief was signed by more than 50 sitting District Attorneys and Attorneys General, 16 current and former Police Chiefs and Sheriffs, as well as the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE).

Lifting up the recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others, *amici* highlight the deeply frayed relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve, and the urgent need for inclusive, honest and thoughtful reform of policing and the justice system. The brief, filed in support of the plaintiffs in *NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund v. Barr*, argues that the Presidential Commission lacks a transparent, equitable and balanced process to gather the perspectives integral to impactful policing reforms, and has failed to comply with the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. *Amici* further argue that these deficiencies have produced a deeply troubling process that will not just fail in its mission, but further erode public trust at a critical moment in time.

“As communities across the country are rightfully demanding a reset of our criminal justice system, the President and Attorney General are retreating to the familiar and failed ‘tough on crime’ policies that have destroyed families and communities,” said **Miriam Krinsky, executive director of [Fair and Just Prosecution](#)**. “We have a timely opportunity to build on the recommendations made by the [Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#) and promote healthier and safer communities. Yet this Commission – composed solely of law enforcement members with no representation from impacted communities, civil rights groups, policing reform advocates, or others representing the public that law enforcement serves – will simply deepen distrust at a fragile moment when our nation is in crisis.”

*Amici* argue that because the Commission’s recommendations can be used to set and justify new policy, it is vitally important that the recommendations be informed by a diverse body of stakeholders, including criminal justice leaders committed to moving away from punitive approaches that have fueled mass incarceration. The composition of the Commission ignores many important voices and perspectives and, as such, its recommendations are unlikely to be accepted by the communities most impacted by law enforcement and criminal justice practices.

As *amici* stress in the brief: “Trust won’t be rebuilt, and the justice system won’t regain legitimacy, if critical policing and prosecution policies are developed through a process that is not transparent, inclusive, and informed by a diverse set of viewpoints. Instead, this starting point will further erode confidence in the integrity of our justice system, leaving communities more at risk and undermining the well-being of individuals *amici* are, and have been, charged with protecting.”

“As communities protest against racial injustice and demand that we reimagine policing and the criminal justice system, it is a foolhardy exercise to do so without their input,” said **St. Louis County, Missouri Prosecuting Attorney Wesley Bell**, a signatory to the brief. “If we are to build a system that the community can trust and that promotes public safety, the community and other diverse stakeholders must have a seat at the decision-making table.”

*Amici* emphasize how important community trust is to keeping neighborhoods safe, observing that “[l]aw enforcement must *earn* the public’s trust... But that is only possible when law enforcement officials pair their words with a meaningful commitment to learning from, and partnering with, the communities they serve.”

“Law enforcement leaders from around the country know that community policing works, but only when there is mutual trust between police and the public, such that they become co-producers of public safety,” said **Joe Brann**, another signatory on the brief and former **Chief of Police** in Hayward, California and founding director of the **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)** in the U.S. Department of Justice. “Without full transparency and community engagement, this Commission and any recommendation coming out of it will be suspect and that will undermine law enforcement’s ability to keep their communities safe.”

The brief was authored by [American Oversight](#) and [Fair and Just Prosecution](#) – a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting a justice system grounded in fairness, equity, compassion, and fiscal responsibility, who also organized the *amicus* effort in this and other similar cases.

“Given the current context of widespread protests and systemic concerns regarding police practices in communities of color, any federal commission addressing policing and criminal justice must operate openly and transparently to assure the public that its deliberations took account of the points of view, interests, and needs of all stakeholders,” said **Austin Evers, executive director of American Oversight**. “Instead, Attorney General Barr appears to have put together a narrow and secretive commission focused on demanding respect of police rather than actually earning the trust of the communities law enforcement serves. In its current form, this commission is ineffective, unrepresentative, and undemocratic.”

Read the brief [here](#), and for a list of amici, see below.

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*Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit <http://www.fairandjustprosecution.org/> or follow us on Facebook [@FairAndJustProsecution](#).*

***List of Amici***

**National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives**

**Roy L. Austin, Jr.**

Former Deputy Assistant to the President, Office of Urban Affairs, Justice, and Opportunity  
Former Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice  
Former Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Columbia

**Aramis Ayala**

State Attorney, Ninth Judicial Circuit, Florida

**Diana Becton**

District Attorney, Contra Costa County, California

**Wesley Bell**

Prosecuting Attorney, St. Louis County, Missouri

**Buta Biberaj**

Commonwealth's Attorney, Loudoun County, Virginia

**Sherry Boston**

District Attorney, DeKalb County, Georgia

**Chesa Boudin**

District Attorney, City and County of San Francisco, California

**RaShall M. Brackney**

Chief, Charlottesville Police Department, Virginia

**Joseph Brann**

Former Director, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice  
Former Chief, Hayward Police Department, California

**Aisha Braveboy**

State's Attorney, Prince George's County, Maryland

**Chris Burbank**

Vice President, Law Enforcement Strategy, Center for Policing Equity  
Former Chief, Salt Lake City Police Department, Utah

**A. Bates Butler III**

Former U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona

**John T. Chisholm**

District Attorney, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin

**Jerry L. Clayton**  
Sheriff, Washtenaw County, Michigan

**Dave Clegg**  
District Attorney, Ulster County, New York

**Shameca Collins**  
District Attorney, Sixth Judicial District, Mississippi

**Scott Colom**  
District Attorney, Sixteenth Judicial District, Mississippi

**Brendan Cox**  
Former Chief, Albany Police Department, New York

**John Creuzot**  
District Attorney, Dallas County, Texas

**Satana Deberry**  
District Attorney, Durham County, North Carolina

**Parisa Dehghani-Tafti**  
Commonwealth's Attorney, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, Virginia

**Brandon del Pozo**  
Former Chief, Burlington Police Department, Vermont

**Steve Descano**  
Commonwealth's Attorney, Fairfax County, Virginia

**Thomas J. Donovan, Jr.**  
Attorney General, State of Vermont

**Michael Dougherty**  
District Attorney, Twentieth Judicial District, Colorado

**Keith Ellison**  
Attorney General, State of Minnesota

**Aaron Ford**  
Attorney General, State of Nevada

**Kimberly M. Foxx**  
State's Attorney, Cook County, Illinois

**Kimberly Gardner**  
Circuit Attorney, City of St. Louis, Missouri

**Stanley Garnett**  
Former District Attorney, Twentieth Judicial District, Colorado

**George Gascón**

Former District Attorney, City and County of San Francisco, California  
Former Chief, San Francisco Police Department, California  
Former Chief, Mesa Police Department, Arizona

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District Attorney, Salt Lake County, Utah

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District Attorney, Bexar County, Texas

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District Attorney, Kings County, New York

**Mark Gonzalez**

District Attorney, Nueces County, Texas

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**Andrea Harrington**

District Attorney, Berkshire County, Massachusetts

**James Hingeley**

Commonwealth's Attorney, Albemarle County, Virginia

**Robert J. Hoffman**

Former Chief, Plainfield Police Department, Connecticut

**John Hummel**

District Attorney, Deschutes County, Oregon

**Natasha Irving**

District Attorney, Sixth Prosecutorial District, Maine

**Michael Jackson**

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**Kathleen Jennings**

Attorney General, State of Delaware

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**Lawrence S. Krasner**

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Former Chief, San Diego Police Department, California  
Former Chief, San Jose Police Department, California  
Former Chief, Richmond Police Department, California

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**Brian Middleton**

District Attorney, Fort Bend County, Texas

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Commonwealth's Attorney, Portsmouth, Virginia

**J. Tom Morgan**

Former District Attorney, DeKalb County, Georgia

**Marilyn J. Mosby**

State's Attorney, Baltimore City, Maryland

**Jody Owens**

District Attorney, Hinds County, Mississippi

**Jim Petro**

Former Attorney General, State of Ohio

**Abdul Pridgen**

Chief, Seaside Police Department, California

**Karl Racine**

Attorney General, District of Columbia

**Ira Reiner**

Former District Attorney, Los Angeles County, California  
Former City Attorney, Los Angeles, California

**Robert J. Reyes**

Former Chief, U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs Police Department

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Sheriff, Suffolk County, Massachusetts

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District Attorney, Bernalillo County, New Mexico

**Peter Volkmann**

Police Commissioner, City of Hudson, New York

**Mike Ward**

Former Chief, Alexandria Police Department, Kentucky

**Lynneice Washington**

District Attorney, Jefferson County, Bessemer Division, Alabama

**Seth Waxman**

Former Solicitor General of the United States, U.S. Department of Justice