



JOINT STATEMENT FROM ELECTED PROSECUTORS IN SUPPORT OF RACHAEL ROLLINS' NOMINATION FOR U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

October 2021

As elected prosecutors currently serving communities across every region of the country, we know that ending the failed policies of mass incarceration is an unequivocally necessary step in building safe, just, and equitable communities. We have served alongside Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins and seen her steadfast commitment to serving every member of her community—including public servants committed to keeping the community safe, people who have been victimized by crime, and individuals who have been ignored or demonized by traditional approaches to prosecution. In a system that often rewards those who blindly adhere to the status quo, she has consistently demonstrated the courage to reject disproven, harmful approaches, and the vision to forge policies that work.

We are well aware that DA Rollins's nomination for U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts has widespread support from a bipartisan group, including five former U.S. Attorneys, [law enforcement leaders](#) (such as the Suffolk County sheriff, the current and most recently retired Boston police commissioners, the Massachusetts State Police colonel, and every police chief in Suffolk county), and a host of others. We are deeply disappointed to see some working to obstruct her nomination with fear-mongering, distortions, and outright lies.

DA Rollins is eminently qualified to be U.S. Attorney. She has a proven record of both enhancing the safety of her jurisdiction and advancing justice. Recently, [independent researchers](#) looked at 67,000 cases prosecuted in Suffolk County over 17 years and found that DA Rollins' groundbreaking [policy](#) of presumptively declining to prosecute certain low-level, non-violent offenses dramatically reduced recidivism. During her three years at the helm of the Suffolk District Attorney's office, she has worked to correct unconstitutional convictions, partnered with community organizations to address substance use disorder, and reinvested in victim services.

The data shows us in no uncertain terms that DA Rollins' policies have made Boston safer. By reducing the use of the criminal justice system's inherently limited resources to prosecute minor crimes of poverty and desperation, she has helped thousands of people avoid the justice system's revolving door and freed up capacity to address the most serious crimes. Yet, during last week's confirmation hearing, several individuals wilfully misrepresented DA Rollins' work and claimed that her work in Boston is somehow to blame for the nationwide increase in violent crime seen during the pandemic—despite evidence to the contrary, including data showing that Boston has seen a [decrease in major crimes](#) this year, compared to 2020.

Criminal justice reform makes communities safer. The data is clear. Unnecessary incarceration causes financial devastation, breaks family ties, and upends individuals' lives in a way that often leads to more crime going forward. For years, common-sense reforms have successfully [decreased incarceration rates without sacrificing public safety](#). We know what makes cities safer and it's [not locking more people up](#)—it's [investing in](#) and empowering our communities. And

communities understand this, increasingly embracing investments in prevention over disproven tough-on-crime approaches.

Recent unfounded misrepresentations of Rollins' exemplary tenure as DA also illustrate the racism underlying attacks on the prosecutorial reform movement. Sadly, the Black female prosecutors at the forefront of bringing prosecution into the 21st century are consistently held to a different standard than their thousands of white male counterparts across the country and all too often face outrageous lies about their records.

Deference to a local Senator's choice for U.S. Attorney is common practice for good reason—local elected leaders are best positioned to understand the needs of their communities. Significantly, this is the first time in 28 years that a nominee for U.S. Attorney has not been approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee thereby requiring further action before consideration by the full Senate.

We applaud the Biden-Harris administration for its nomination of a visionary leader such as DA Rollins, who will, when confirmed, be the first Black woman to serve as U.S. Attorney in Massachusetts. We urge other national leaders to quickly move this capable prosecutor forward without delay.

Signed,

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