

Greetings, my name is Keturah Herron and I am a policy strategist at the ACLU of Kentucky and also a member of Black Lives Matter in Louisville. I want to thank you for inviting me to speak on this important issue of race, policing, policy, and justice. I come before you to ensure we lift up Breonna Taylor's name, and as we continue to fight for justice for her and other Black people who have lost their lives due to police brutality.

We see protests across the country because enough is enough. During this time of the coronavirus, America and the world were essentially put on pause, which forced people to stop and pay attention. For years, Black people have been screaming, and America has largely ignored us.. I think the coronavirus coupled with the horrific death of George Floyd forced America to reflect. For eight minutes and forty-six seconds, the world watched as a man begged for his life and called out to his deceased mother as he lay dying. That is not something that people can easily erase from their minds. No distraction could take the images in that video away and it was time for America to respond.

When killings like those of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor happen, people will lend their voices from around the world. However, we understand that people and their attention spans are fickle. There will be another story, the cameras will turn, the media attention will fade, and the people left in those communities that have been rocked by police brutality remain. They will be left to pick up the pieces. It is essential for people that live in these communities to know that they can impact legislation on a local-level to stop these senseless deaths from happening. In Louisville, we took a first step with passing Breonna's Law, which bans the use of no-knock and quick knock warrants, and requires all police involved in serving a warrant to wear body cameras. The law requires them to turn them on 5 mins before serving a warrant and keep them on 5 mins after the warrant is served.

When Breonna's Law passed, a huge TV was brought outside on the steps of City Hall so that citizens could watch the proceedings. Folks were engaged because they understood their voices mattered, and their voices were able to impact legislation on a local level. They learned it was the judges they elect and the representatives they choose locally that would affect the laws that govern their day to day living. Now people are engaging in different arenas. People are organizing around a more just budget and others are closely monitoring the collective bargaining agreement between the FOP and our local government.

When organizing with people that have existed in a survival mentality for years due to systemic racism, it is difficult to get them interested in local politics. The truth is, it is difficult to get anyone interested in local politics (pause for polite laughter). Many people are simply trying to make it from day-to-day. As we organize, we are also educating people on how it is not just the things that

are done at a federal level but at a local and state levels that will impact their lives. Many just do not fully understand how the political system works. Many people will go out to vote for the President but will not go out to vote for a school board member. Also, you are dealing with a historical aspect where many people feel that this nation has never done the right thing politically when it comes to Black people. There is always a fight about why their vote matters because historically, this nation has elevated to the highest seats of power people that did not have Black people's best interest at heart. These are uphill battles.

In Louisville, we are taking the time for political education to ensure people in the streets understand what and how we are fighting systemic injustices. We have encouraged them to call and email their council representative to lift up the demands of Breonna Taylor's family. Although we made history with the passing of Breonna's Law to ban no knock warrants in Louisville, I am saddened that it took the death of Breonna to push this legislation. You cannot have the Castle Doctrine on one hand, where people have the right to defend themselves and their homes and then have no-knock warrants, where the police can enter your home, without knocking. These two things are contradictory to one another. Even Commonwealth Attorney Tom Wine, stated, "There is no amount of drugs or drug money worth a human life." Sadly, a young, Black woman had to die for this to be acknowledged. And it shouldn't take the death of a Black person for America to wake up. But it seems it always does. Across this nation, many states have Stand Your Ground or Castle Doctrine laws. Those must be looked at in juxtaposition to no-knock warrants. Breonna Taylor is not the first Black woman that died due to a no-knock warrant, and sadly until these warrants are banned across the nation, she will not be the last.

There is always talk about when our federal government should step in and when we should leave things to state and local jurisdictions. It is always the time to do what is right and I believe now is the time for our federal government to take action and prohibit police policies and practices that brutalize communities. Today this body should make it your duty and priority to ban no-knock warrants, ensure police officers don't get special protection when they engage in misconduct or use excessive force. Police who swear an oath to protect and serve should be held to a higher standard. We should draft policy to ensure police have a duty to intervene when they witness their colleagues brutalizing someone. We need to end the 1033 program which militarizes our police and stop attacking peaceful protesters with tear gas and other tools and tactics which are used in war zones.

Ultimately, we must reimagine public safety. We must divest in policing and incarceration and invest in systems that provide equal access to housing,

education, healthcare, safety and opportunity. Thank you for allowing me to speak today.