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The Detroit Branch NAACP Expresses Significant Concerns to Proposed Four Day Youth Curfew

DETROIT -- The Detroit Branch NAACP is concerned with the request by the Detroit Police Department (DPD) to the Detroit City Council seeking a four day curfew from June 19-22 for youth 17 and under. This curfew would seek to be implemented during the Detroit River Days Festival and the 56th Annual Fireworks display. While we support efforts by law enforcement and the community to deal with crime and to ensure a stable and positive quality of life in our community, the request made by DPD seeks to impose an aggressive curfew against Detroit youth.

“Everyone should expect to have a fun, safe time with their friends and families when they attend events in the City,” says Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony, President, Detroit Branch NAACP. “However, implementing a curfew that will unfairly target young people in the City of Detroit is not the most effective solution to these critical issues. It could also give unnecessary credence to the often discussed issue of only targeting people of color in situations such as this. The question of whether or not curfews curtail violence or promote a safer community has never been empirically substantiated to our knowledge. However, the question of maintaining civil liberty as a necessity for our democracy has been substantiated since the founding of our nation.”

The proposed curfew by DPD will more than likely cause a strain on an already inadequately staffed department. Instead of increased curfews we offer the following recommendations:

- 1) Increased job opportunities for Detroit’s youth;
- 2) Increased opportunities and additional hours for city parks and recreational centers;
- 3) A Public awareness campaign for parents and guardians;
- 4) Engagement of community associations, churches, businesses and non-profits; and
- 5) More community policing, i.e. walking the streets and connecting with the people at large.

The lives of citizens is indeed most important; the civil liberties of our citizens are equally as important. “The proposed increased curfew will not address the challenges faced in our community,” says Donnell R. White, Executive Director, Detroit Branch NAACP. “We must all come together to devise strategies that are holistic in scope.”

The Detroit Branch NAACP is the largest branch in the Association. For more information please call (313) 871-2087.

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