



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

POLICE ABUSE OF ANY CITIZEN MUST NOT BE TOLERATED!

DETROIT (August 2, 2018) – Once again, we find ourselves forced to denounce another inappropriate action on the part of a member of our police department. The recent beating of a mentally ill woman while held in custody at Detroit Receiving Hospital is unacceptable, inappropriate, and inexcusable. Part of the oath that a police officer takes includes this section: *“I will uphold fundamental human rights and afford equal respect to all people according to law.”* Police officers are held to a higher standard and must be accountable for their actions which could lead to injury and death.

This very tragic incident reminds us again of the need for training, accountability, and monitoring of members of law enforcement. Police Chief James Craig was correct in immediately indicating at today’s press conference, a *“grave concern and being troubled by the video displaying the incident.”* The suspension of the police officer is indeed appropriate. An 18-year veteran should know better and is expected to do better. While we do not excuse and condone disrespect or abuse by citizens on police officers, it is understood that such occasions of possible conflict will occur. It is in these circumstances where training kicks in. In such situations, sound judgement must be demonstrated. Police officers carry tasers, handcuffs, and communication devices. They go through physical and mental training. As the Detroit Police Department must deal with at least 500 calls per month regarding the mentally ill, this was not an unusual situation. Certainly, three or four officers should be able to detain a naked, mentally challenged woman. The officer in question has had mental health and community policing and advocacy training.

There is a reason that Detroit has not seen a physical uproar in the community concerning these issues. It is rooted in the relationship of trust between members of law enforcement and key segments of this community. The Detroit Police Department must continue to remain transparent and must not try to defend or mischaracterize bad behavior. It is in the interest of the police department and our community. We must root out individuals who cast such a demeaning and dangerous perspective on the department. It is also important that other officers who witness these types of misdeeds step up and get in between officers who are out of control when they engage in this kind of behavior. We call upon the Detroit Police Department to do its due diligence and the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office to determine whether criminal charges should be filed against this officer and others who may have aided and abetted in this tragic situation. Detroit is better than this. The Detroit Police Department is better than this. Our community deserves better than this.

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