



***NEW BEDFORD BRANCH***  
***NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT***  
***OF COLORED PEOPLE***

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—Chartered 1917— Historic Home of Frederick Douglass -Lewis Temple -Sgt. William H. Carney

**NAACP New Bedford Branch**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NAACP New Bedford Branch Issues Demands to Protect Communities of Color**

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons.

The horrific death of George Floyd and, more recently, the deliberate shooting of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta along with Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and other Black citizens too numerous to name, has increased the number of lives lost to state-sanctioned violence and white supremacy. These incidents are becoming all too common. Enough is enough! The National NAACP alarm, “We are done dying” is the rallying call of a people who for more than 450 years have been treated as outcasts in a country their ancestors built. Every Black person in this country has a right to live, a right to breathe, and a right to be a part of their community, without fear of violence and senseless attacks simply for the color of their skin.

But history seems to repeat itself. Once again Black people are forced to suffer the fatal burden of a system unchecked. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is outraged by the recent killings of Black people. Yet, at the same time, we salute and encourage the young people who are the force behind the current movement. This movement is a call to every American institution to review and correct its policies, practices, and culture to ascertain how they are adversely affecting communities of color.

Therefore, we as the NAACP New Bedford Branch, make the following demands of New Bedford City Mayor John Mitchell, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, and District Attorney Thomas Quinn III:

- Establish Community Review Boards (CRB) with subpoena power to oversee and review police incidents and maintain checks and balances among the police department.
- Prohibit the use of choke holds and knee holds by New Bedford police officers.

- Implement mandatory and continual training of all parties in the police department regarding: de-escalation tactics/procedures, implicit and racial bias, mental health, and domestic violence.
- Require that information requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the State Open Records Act, and others result in police officer incident records being made available and accessible to the public, and that they include:
  - police officer names, badge numbers, body cam footage, police record history etc.
  - department disciplinary and accountability policies, history of department responses to use of fatal and excessive force, etc.
- Institute a credential renewal process for police officers and the department periodically and upon incidents or complaints, especially those related to fatal or excessive force.
  - Provide periodic progress reports on reforms/processes.
- Review the police budget to consider reallocation of funds to agencies/the police department which may be better suited to handle certain areas of responsibility.
- Review use of force policies to abolish unlawful practices and policies in order to eliminate police brutality and the murdering of innocent individuals e.g., George Floyd and Malcolm Gracia.
- Release all available evidence of the Malcolm Gracia case to the public.
- Mandate the use of body cameras for the New Bedford Police Department.
- Address and remove the disproportionate use of surveillance in target areas of communities of color.
- Examine overtime wages for police officers.
- Rescind the High Energy Patrol Initiative New Bedford Police Directive 06-71.

We as the NAACP New Bedford Branch demand that New Bedford City Mayor John Mitchell, Police Chief Joseph Cordeiro, and District Attorney Thomas Quinn III stop the unjust homicides of the residents of our New Bedford community.

The citizens of New Bedford alongside the NAACP are watching and waiting to see how the Mayor John Mitchell and his office will rectify the wrongful death of Malcolm Gracia. We demand those who commit an unjust murder will be prosecuted and brought to justice. Moreso, we demand this policy is enforced to ensure that no wrongful death of our citizens will ever occur in our city of New Bedford again.