



**Comments to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee
Oversight Hearing on Policing Practices and Law Enforcement Accountability
June 10, 2020**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that was founded 100 years ago in 1920 by suffragists who understood the importance of securing voting rights for women. Since 1920, the League has worked to deliver on our mission to empower voters and defend democracy. The League structure is a federated model with affiliates in all 50 states as well as the District of Columbia. We have 764 local affiliates who reside in every congressional district in the country.

The League of Women Voters grieves the murders of George Floyd and the countless other Black lives that have been tragically taken at the hands of law enforcement officers who are rarely held fully accountable for their actions. We also mourn those who have lost their lives or been harmed, mentally or physically, as a result of America's pervasive culture of anti-Blackness. The systems of oppression that have perpetuated the myth of white supremacy in our country must be dismantled if we are ever to become the nation we pledge to be—indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

As an organization whose mission is to empower voters and defend democracy, we stand in solidarity with all Black communities. The League shall do so not only by speaking out against racism in all forms, but by doing the work required of us to be anti-racist. We are committed to listening to and amplifying Black voices and educating ourselves and our children on the historic and ongoing systemic racism that plagues this country.

The League acknowledges, painfully, that America is a nation founded on racism. Therefore, all who live in this country must contribute to and participate in organizations actively working to achieve full liberation and inclusive freedom. We must all advocate for anti-racist policies at every level of government.

Today, the League is encouraged to see the House Judiciary Committee holding this important hearing and discussing legislation that addresses the systematic issues within



our society. **Now is the time for Congress to take action and truly overhaul federal policing laws.** While we agree that policy change at the state and local level is necessary, it is up to the federal government to set the standard for justice in America. For far too long our national leaders have failed to act on meaningful legislation on policing and safety in our country.

The *Justice in Policing Act of 2020*, which you are considering today, is a first step towards making clear that police brutality and murder has no place in America. The League is supportive of its introduction. This bill follows the strong police accountability framework that the League contributed to along with over 400 civil rights and justice organizations across the country. It includes measures which would ban police chokeholds like the one that killed George Floyd and prohibit police from using no-knock warrants in drug cases, like the one that was used in the killing of Breonna Taylor. Additional pieces of the bill would transform how we handle police abuse in this country by creating a police misconduct registry and providing the Justice Department authority to investigate and prosecute police misconduct.

Like all legislation, this is not a perfect bill, and we look forward to continuing to work with leadership in Congress to improve it before it reaches the floor of the U.S. House. The League of Women Voters looks forward to working with our partners in the civil rights community to support this important effort to advance a comprehensive justice reform bill towards passage.

Please reach out to Jessica Jones Capparell, jjonescapparell@lwv.org, if you wish to discuss this statement of the League's support of policies surrounding these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Virginia Kase", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Virginia Kase
CEO, League of Women Voters of the United States