

Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage
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The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage Statement on the Passing of HR1 and Police Reform

The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (the Council) is grateful that the legislature used this special session to pass meaningful police reform. As the state begins a conversation about racism as a public health crisis, it is important to examine the impact of the justice system. Legislators went beyond mere examination and passed reforms, including:

- Establishing a new community relations advisory council to consult with the Police Officers Standards and Training (POST) Board.
- Prohibiting the use of chokeholds and other restraint methods.
- De-escalation training for peace officers when responding to people with autism or in a mental health crisis.
- Outlawing warrior training.
- Creating a special, independent Bureau of Criminal Apprehension unit for investigating fatal police encounters.
- Additional required reporting around use-of-force incidents.

Undoubtedly, more work still needs to be done. Yet, we are grateful to the state and legislative leaders, advocates, Council staff, partners and community members who responded to and created change during this time of crisis. The Council will continue to execute our role as advisors to the Governor and Legislature as the community calls for meaningful reforms.

We thank Gov. Tim Walz, Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, Speaker Melissa Hortman, Majority Leader Paul Gazelka, Sen. Warren Limmer, Rep. Carlos Mariani, Rep. Rena Moran and the POCI Caucus for working together and on behalf of our communities. We appreciate the legislative leaders who have thoughtfully listened to and acted on the concerns of people across Minnesota. We are grateful to Rep. Ruth Richardson and Sen. Jeff Hayden for authoring bills that would declare racism as a public health crisis. An act that should be used to frame policy as it relates to policing and any issue that impacts Minnesotans of African heritage.

The Council is hopeful that the current reforms will lead to even more substantial actions that increase transparency, accountability and trust in our state.

Thank you,



Justin Terrell
Executive Director
The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage

Members of the Council
Chair, Nerita Hughes
Vice Chair, Wayne Doe
Treasurer, Alfreda Daniels

Secretary, Twauna Mullins
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Biftu Bussa

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The Minnesota Legislature empowered the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage to ensure that people of African heritage fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of the State of Minnesota. Generally, the Council is charged with the responsibility of:

- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on issues confronting People of African Heritage;
- Advising the Governor and the Legislature on statutes, rules and revisions to programs to ensure that Black people have access to benefits and services provided to people in Minnesota;
- Serving as a liaison to the federal government, local government units and private organizations on matters relating to People of African Heritage in Minnesota;
- Implementing programs designed to solve problems of People of African Heritage when authorized by statute, rule or order; and
- Publicizing the accomplishments of People of African Heritage and their contributions to the state.

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