

MEDIA ADVISORY

Family of Jayland Walker and Walker Family Legal Team Join Akron Community Leaders in Condemning Reinstatement of Officers Under Investigation for Killing of Jayland Walker

Statement from Bobby DiCello and Kenneth Abbarno, Walker Family Legal Team

The family of Jayland Walker and the Walker family legal team expresses its thanks and wholehearted support for a letter sent this week by 43 Akron faith and community leaders to Chief of Police, Steve Mylett, condemning the reinstatement of the eight officers currently under investigation for the June shooting and killing of Jayland Walker.

Chief Mylett's justification of his decision that a department staffing shortage makes their reinstatement necessary is disrespectful to the community and the Walker family, not to mention terribly short-sighted. It is the very definition of hypocrisy for Chief Mylett to claim, as he has previously, that his department is working hard to build trust among Akron's minority communities, and then make a callous decision like this that fosters further distrust of the Akron Police Department among this population, while jeopardizing the legitimacy of BCI's investigation.

The Walker family has been told repeatedly to be peaceful, allow the investigation of the eight officers to take place, and believe in the process. And while they have done that, the Chief has decided to reinstate the officers who killed Jayland and has, tragically, misrepresented the feedback he received from local clergy before taking that step.

Letter from Akron's religious and community leaders to Chief Mylett

October 21, 2022

Cc: Mayor Daniel Horrigan
Akron City Council

Dear Chief Mylett:

We, the undersigned, clergy, community servant-leaders and citizens of Akron hereby write to express our objection to the reinstatement of the eight officers under investigation for the killing of Jayland Walker.

There is no justification for officers under an ongoing investigation for *violating* the law, working in any capacity—including desk duty—in an agency we entrust with *enforcing* the law.

Whatever staffing crisis there may be, it cannot be more challenging than would be the erosion of any trust remaining between the community and police. Those under investigation for committing crimes cannot be in any proximity to a workplace where their crimes are under investigation. There is no workplace that would tolerate such an arrangement.

Furthermore, clergy demanded and received assurance from you, Chief Mylett, that this proposed decision for reinstatement was not to be made before consultation with the Walker Family, inclusive of their Pastor, Rev. Robert Dejournett. Not only did you renege on this consultation, you have, on record, said clergy an

others supported your decision. This is not true at all. Reinstating Jayland's alleged killers is traumatic enough, but you have also falsified your conversations with our respected spiritual and community leaders. Your dishonesty about your interaction with clergy and other community leaders only serves to undermine their stature in the community they serve.

Chief, the killing of Jayland Walker occurred not by your hand, but on your watch. However, the decision to reinstate, as well as the decision to besmirch the integrity of our spiritual and community leaders to create division between Akron's citizens, are both *by your own hand and of your will*. That you would assume this community is not fully aware of law enforcement's history of efforts to infiltrate, divide and neutralize our community, is also an insult to the intelligence of every member of our community.

Therefore, as a community absolutely united, we demand the immediate revocation of the reinstatement of the eight officers under investigation for killing this community's son, Jayland.

Signed,

- Judi Hill, President, NAACP
- Rev. Kevin Rushing, Senior Pastor, Untied Baptist Church
- Bishop Kenneth Paramore, Senior Pastor, Christ Centered Church
- Rev. Stacy Jenkins, Senior Pastor, House of Prayer for All People
- Pastor Larry Chadwick, Senior Pastor, Unity Holiness COGIC
- Pastor Kat Vinson, Senior Pastor, Rhema Evangelistic Ministries
- Pastor Daren Brake, Associate Pastor, The House of the Lord
- Pastor William Bridges, Senior Pastor, Higher Ground Worship Center
- Pastor Robert DeJournett, Senior Pastor, St. Ashworth Temple COGIC
- Pastor Jeffrey Dennis, Senior Pastor, Mount Calvary Baptist Church
- Dr. Ollie Jones, Senior Pastor, Perfecting Saints Heart to Heart Ministries
- Pastor Deante Lavender, Senior Pastor, Remedy Church
- Bishop Emmitt Lee, Senior Pastor, Galilee Baptist Church
- Pastor Michael Martin, Senior Pastor, Christ is the Answer Ministries
- Dr. David Nelson, Senior Pastor, New Hope Baptist Church
- Pastor Eugene Norris, Senior Pastor, Mountain of the Lord Fellowship
- Pastor Lori Anderson, Senior Pastor, The Church Akron
- Dr. Roderick Pounds, Senior Pastor, Second Baptist Church
- Bishop Mayceo Smith, Senior Pastor, City of Joy
- Rev. Robert Lee Senior, Pastor, New Covenant S. P.
- Rev. Paul Watson, Senior Pastor, Livingstone Baptist Church
- Rev Gerald Ivery, Senior Pastor, Central Starlight MBC
- Minister Donald Lykes, Minister, Central Starlight MBC
- Supt. Dr. Tony Huggins, Senior Pastor, Shelton's Temple Prayer COGIC
- Pastor Kenneth McGraw, Senior Pastor, Abundant Faith Ministries COGIC
- Pastor Stephen Chifunda, Senior Pastor, St. Paul AME Church
- Rev. Raymond Green Jr., Executive Director, Freedom Bloc
- Rev. Bruce Butcher, President, Payne Theological Seminary Alumni
- Mr. Eric Garret, Owner, Beyond Expectations Barber College

- Pastor Mark T. Jackson, Senior Pastor, Light Church
- Bishop Joey Johnson, Founder & Visionary, The House of the Lord
- Rev Ron Shultz, Senior Pastor, Family of Faith United Methodist Church
- Pastor Stephen Lott, Senior Pastor, Tower of Prayer Worship Center
- Bishop Samuel Hampton II, Senior Pastor, First Apostolic Faith Church
- Bishop David Parker, Senior Pastor, Zion Apostolic Church
- Pastor Greg Partridge, Senior Pastor, New Exodus Christian Fellowship
- Lynn Puryear, Vice President Workforce Development, Akron Urban League
- Pastor Lori Porter, Senior Pastor, The Church Akron
- Rev. Nanette Pitt, Senior Minister, First Congregational Church of Akron
- Pastor William Bunton, Senior Pastor, Mount Olive Baptist Church
- Apostle Jimmie Rogers, Senior Pastor, Good Hope Ministries
- Rev Carl Wallace, Retired
- Pastor Brenden Glass, Senior Pastor, Span Ministries

Print Name	Title	Church / Organization
Judi Hill	President	NAACP
Rev. Kevin Rushing	Senior Pastor	Untied Baptist Church
Bishop Kenneth Paramore	Senior Pastor	Christ Centered Church
Rev. Stacy Jenkins	Senior Pastor	House of Prayer for All People
Pastor Larry Chadwick	Senior Pastor	Unity Holiness COGIC
Pastor Kat Vinson	Senior Pastor	Rhema Evangelistic Ministries
Pastor Daren Brake	Associate Pastor	The House of the Lord
Pastor William Bridges	Senior Pastor	Higher Ground Worship Center
Pastor Robert DeJournett	Senior Pastor	St. Ashworth Temple COGIC
Pastor Jeffrey Dennis	Senior Pastor	Mount Calvary Baptist Church
Dr. Ollie Jones	Senior Pastor	Perfecting Saints Heart to Heart Ministries
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Apostle Jimmie Rogers	Senior Pastor	Good Hope Ministries
Rev Carl Wallace	Retired	
Pastor Brenden Glass	Senior Pastor	Span Ministries

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