

# Civil Rights Organizations' Statement on Lifting NYC Curfew

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** June 7, 2020

## **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

*Ben Schaefer, NYCLU, 212-607-3372, [bschaefer@nyclu.org](mailto:bschaefer@nyclu.org)*

*Redmond Haskins, The Legal Aid Society, 929-441-2384, [rhaskins@legal-aid.org](mailto:rhaskins@legal-aid.org)*

*Jen Nessel, Center for Constitutional Rights, 212-614-6449, [jnessel@ccrjustice.org](mailto:jnessel@ccrjustice.org)*

**NEW YORK CITY** - Early this morning, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that New York City's curfew was lifted effective immediately. This change was preceded by a day of historic, peaceful protests against police violence against Black people that stretched across the entire city and the threat of a lawsuit. **The New York Civil Liberties Union, The Legal Aid Society, the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center, and the Center for Constitutional Rights** threatened to sue on behalf of Black and LGBTQIA-led organizations, protesters, medical workers, and legal observers, including **Take Back the Bronx, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, and FIERCE**, if the curfew was extended beyond today. The following is a joint statement from those organizations:

“After immense pressure from protesters and the threat of a lawsuit we had prepared to file today, Mayor de Blasio has lifted New York City's curfew, a blunt tool of state-sanctioned oppression used to silence legitimate protest. The City's focus should not be on silencing protest and resistance, but on ending anti-Black police violence and impunity. Eliminating the curfew was a necessary step in stopping the cycle of police violence and silencing the mass of voices demanding recognition and dignity for Black Lives. No longer will the NYPD be able to use curfew enforcement as justification for their attacks and arrests on protesters, essential workers, journalists, and bystanders. As protests continue, we are watching closely and ready to sue if the mayor reinstates the curfew or considers other measures to restrict free speech.

“This week, the streets of New York City hummed with anger, love, and purpose to say clearly that Black Lives Matter and we must do more to address the harms of policing and the deeply embedded anti-Black racism in our society. This powerful movement was built by Black leaders and communities, and tens of thousands of New Yorkers showed up to be in solidarity with them.

“But in order for New York City to make meaningful change and reduce the harms of policing, there is much more work ahead. Lawmakers in Albany must fully repeal 50-a to make sure police officers are held accountable and police misconduct isn't kept secret. When someone dies or is abused during a police encounter, we need truly independent investigations not led by the police themselves. And the City Council needs to cut police funding, scale back police involvement in our schools, and divert resources toward services that will benefit the community.

“This is just the start of a long journey for true justice and accountability. We will be fighting for New Yorkers every step of the way.”

###