Legislation Text

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Urging the U.S Congress to pass H.R. 1280, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021.

WHEREAS, On February 24, 2021, California Representative Karen Bass introduced H.R. 1280 also known as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021; and

WHEREAS, The drafting of the legislation was preceded by a series of protests against the deaths of numerous black Americans at the hands of police officers and civilians in 2020, including George Floyd and Breonna Taylor; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 1280 addresses a wide range of policies and issues regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability, including combating excessive force, and racial bias in policing. The bill increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, enhances transparency and data collection, and establishes best practices and training requirements; and

WHEREAS, It would limit qualified immunity as a defense to liability in a private civil action against a law enforcement officer, as well as granting administrative subpoena power to the Department of Justice (DOJ) in pattern-or-practice investigations; and

WHEREAS, H.R. 1280 also establishes a framework to prevent and remedy racial profiling by law enforcement at the federal, state, and local levels. It also limits the unnecessary use of force and restricts the use of no-knock warrants, chokeholds, and carotid holds; and

WHEREAS, The bill would create a national registry, the National Police Misconduct Registry, to compile data on complaints and records of police misconduct. It also establishes new reporting requirements, including on the use of force, officer misconduct, and routine policing practices; and

WHEREAS, Finally, it would direct the DOJ to create uniform accreditation standards for law enforcement agencies and requires law enforcement officers to complete training on racial profiling, implicit bias, and the duty to intervene when another officer uses excessive force; and

WHEREAS, The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act was passed in the Democratically-controlled House in 2021 but was held in the Senate, due to negotiations between Republican and Democratic senators collapsing in September 2021; and

WHEREAS, Although the bill was held, the necessity for federal police reform has remained salient. At least 1,176 people were killed by law enforcement officers in the United States in 2022, the most of any year since at least 2013; and

WHEREAS, On January 7, 2023, Tyre Nichols was brutally beaten to death by Memphis police officers. His senseless murder has reignited conversations about federal police accountability legislation, such as H.R. 1280; and

WHEREAS, Congress must not continue to be idle as the lives of black and brown peoples are at stake. Comprehensive police reform that protects lives must be enacted; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, This Council hereby urges the U.S Congress to pass H.R. 1280, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021.

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