

Community Organizations Call on Walz, Frey, Carter and Hutchinson to Stop “Operation Safety Net” Immediately

NEWS STATEMENT

April 15, 2021

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SAINT PAUL, Minn. – Minnesotans across the state are grieving the death of Daunte Wright by an ex-Brooklyn Center police officer. Today, community organizations joined local elected officials to call on Governor Walz, Mayor Frey, Mayor Carter and Sheriff Hutchinson to stop and draw back “Operation Safety Net,” the state’s militarized operation deployed in Brooklyn Center and across St. Paul and Minneapolis ahead of the trial of Derek Chauvin.

Over 35 organizations released the following statement:

“As community organizations who live and organize in Brooklyn Center, Minneapolis, and across the Twin Cities, we call on Governor Walz, Mayor Frey, Mayor Carter and Sheriff Hutchinson to stop ‘Operation Safety Net’ immediately. We are horrified by the state’s [preemptive force](#) against its people, and the compounding trauma caused by the state against Black, brown, and Indigenous communities. Executive leaders are fully in charge of this force and have the power to stop this harmful approach.

Our communities have the right to live and protest without being terrorized by a militarized police force. Journalists have the right to report what is happening without being harmed by police or arrested.

We have already received reports from Brooklyn Center of youth sent to the ER after being struck by a tear gas canister. More than 100 people were seriously injured by police during the uprisings in Minneapolis last summer. Minnesota researchers made it clear in a [medical journal](#) report that ‘less-lethal’ force including tear gas and rubber bullets are not appropriate for crowd

control. The report found 40% of people hit by rubber bullets sustained head injuries including traumatic brain injuries and eye injuries. Other studies have shown [tear gas can cause miscarriages](#) and harm fetal development. Leaders in charge of MPD have [not disciplined a single officer](#) for misconduct.

The health of our communities was at a breaking point before the death of Daunte Wright. The state's use of force against Minnesotans exercising their first amendment rights in Brooklyn Center and militarization of our cities in response to police violence is wrong, traumatizing, and adding to the public health crisis of COVID, police brutality, and systemic racism. The continued use of militaristic tools of oppression to intimidate and halt peaceful, if justifiably angry, protest is another sign that Minnesota continues to prioritize white fears over Black lives.

We call for immediate action by executive leaders to stop 'Operation Safety Net'. Punishing people for grieving police violence with militarized force is not leadership - it is violence. For the health of our communities, we are pleading for a rational change of plans, transparency, and accountability. We truly fear what is to come if this is the response before Derek Chauvin's trial verdict. Our communities deserve answers for how we got here and a guarantee this will not continue."

Signed,

ACER
ACLU-MN
The Alliance
Asian American Organizing Project
Awood Center
CAIR-MN
Coalition of Asian American Leaders
CTUL
Filipinx for Immigrant rights and Racial justice MN
Gender Justice
Giniw Collective
Healthcare Reparations Cooperative
Honor the Earth
Inquilinx Unidxs por Justicia
ISAIAH
Jewish Community Action
MN8

MN350

MN Interfaith Power and Light

Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Education Support Professionals, Local 59

Minnesota NOW

Minnesota Nurses Association

Minnesota Voice

Nick Kor for City Council

Our Stories Our Health

OutFront Minnesota

Recall Freeman

Reclaim the Block

Release MN8

Reviving the Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment (RISE)

Robin for Minneapolis

Saint Paul Federation of Educators

SEAD Project

SEIU Local 26

SEIU Local 284

Sierra Club North Star Chapter

TakeAction Minnesota

Theater Mu

Twin Cities DSA

Unidos MN

Vietnamese Social Services of MN

Violence Free Minnesota

Visual Black Justice

826 MSP

100% Campaign