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November 19, 2025

Dear Representative:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the undersigned organizations, we write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 5107, the “Common-Sense Law Enforcement and Accountability Now in D.C. (CLEAN DC) Act of 2025, and to H.R. 5214 the D.C. Cash Bail Reform Act.

H.R. 5107 would largely overturn the District of Columbia’s Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act (CPJRAA) of 2022, while H.R. 5214 would require mandatory pretrial detention and cash bail for an arbitrary overly broad list of offenses.

These bills are part of a long line of attacks on democracy in the District of Columbia. D.C. citizens pay federal taxes and comply with all the other duties of residence, yet they are deprived of not only any voting representation in Congress, but also of control over their own local governance. With these votes, Congress would yet again micromanage the affairs of the District and relegate the more than 700,000 residents of D.C. to second-class citizenship — and without a single vote representing D.C.

D.C. autonomy and D.C. statehood are civil rights and racial justice issues. D.C. residents deserve the same right as residents from any U.S. state to decide the laws that are best for their communities. It remains painfully clear that the right to vote is meaningless if the will of D.C. residents can be overturned by a Congress that gives them no say in the matter. Congress must listen to Mayor Bowser and the D.C. Council and reject this attempt to roll back duly passed D.C. legislation.¹

Washingtonians are best situated to address police reform policies in their own community and deserve to determine these policies without congressional interference. The CPJRAA includes commonsense reforms to increase police accountability and government transparency, and it directly responds to the calls from District communities for additional law enforcement oversight. Many of the reforms in this bill echo provisions in the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, as well as President Biden’s executive orders on policing — including improving access to body-worn camera recordings, restricting access to military-grade weapons, and creating a public discipline database of information related to sustained

¹ Flynn, Meagan & Silverman, Ellie. “D.C. leaders begin lobbying Congress against effort to block policing bill.” *The Washington Post*. March 18, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/03/18/dc-congress-lobbying-policing-bill/>.

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allegations of police misconduct.² D.C., like many other jurisdictions, initially passed these reforms in response to the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and the need to enact systemic police reform.³ In the wake of the deployment of the National Guard and surge of federal law enforcement in D.C., there has been an increase in instances of police brutality and unwarranted searches.⁴ Congress must not block D.C. from heeding the calls of its residents by rescinding police oversight law.

Legislation like the CPJRAA is not anti-police, rather it helps restore public confidence in law enforcement both by deterring abuses of power and demonstrating that law enforcement is not above the law. Holding police officers accountable for violating the law does not lead to an increase in crime⁵ in fact, D.C. saw a 30-year low in violent crime in 2024, after the CPJRAA was enacted.⁶ Between 2010 and 2020, Washington, D.C. paid out more than \$91 million in police misconduct settlements.⁷ Yet, according to an audit, between 2015 and 2021, D.C. was forced to rehire 37 Metropolitan Police Department officers who were fired due to sustained misconduct allegations, with the city awarding them more than \$14.3 million in back pay.⁸ Police oversight is crucial to preventing and holding officers accountable for misconduct against the very people they have sworn to protect.

H.R. 5214 proposes drastic, harmful changes to D.C.'s pretrial laws, which ensure that pretrial release decisions are based on assessments of true risk, rather than wealth. It would impose mandatory pretrial jailing of people who are simply accused of certain offenses, a change that is flatly unconstitutional. Its requirement of cash bail for other offenses would have a devastating impact on low-income people who are also simply accused. These changes would swing the door wide open to abuses, and they would disproportionately impact people of color.

² L24-345: Comprehensive Policing and Justice Reform Amendment Act of 2022 (D.C. 2021-2022). <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/24-345>. See H.R. 5361, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2025. 119th Cong.; Exec. Order 14074. "Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Safety. 87 Fed. Reg. 32945. May 21, 2022; Exec. Order 13929, note, this executive order was rescinded in 2025

³ "Legislative Reforms to Strengthen Accountability, Reduce Reliance on Policing, and Invest in Black and Brown Communities." *Legal Defense Fund (LDF)* (last accessed Nov. 4, 2025). <https://www.naacpldf.org/george-floyd-anniversary/>.

⁴ Ittai Sopher, Alexis Wainwright. "D.C. Councilmembers question Metro police use of force during alleged fare evasion arrest." *WUSA9*. Aug. 16, 2025. <https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/police/washington-dc-arrest-district-trayon-white-navy-yard-metro-police-department/65-2ab8c544-d01b-4a56-9232-9c8e6551cc52>; Carrie Johnson. "'The most illegal search': Judges push back against DC criminal charges." *NPR*. Aug. 26, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/08/26/g-s1-85119/crime-washington-dc-judges-arrests>.

⁵ Lo, Kenny & Figgatt, Sarah. "Violent Crime Rates Declined in 10 Jurisdictions Following Comprehensive Police Reform." *Center for American Progress*. Nov. 16, 2020. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/violent-crime-rates-declined-10-jurisdictions-following-comprehensive-police-reform/>.

⁶ U.S. Attorney's Office District of Columbia. "Violent Crime in D.C. Hits 30-year low." Jan. 3, 2025. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/violent-crime-dc-hits-30-year-low>.

⁷ Alexander, Keith L., et al. "The hidden billion-dollar cost of repeated police misconduct." *The Washington Post*. March 9, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/interactive/2022/police-misconduct-repeated-settlements/>.

⁸ Gathright, Jenny. "D.C. Police Were Forced to Rehire More Than Three Dozen Officers Accused of Misconduct, Auditor Finds." *DCist*. Oct. 6, 2022. <https://dcist.com/story/22/10/06/dc-police-auditor-report-hiring-firing-misconduct/>. D.C. Police Chief Robert Contee has noted his frustration with the disciplinary system and having to rehire such officers. *Ibid*.

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These bills and other attacks on D.C.'s autonomy are emblematic of larger efforts to allow state and federal legislatures to exert control and authority over Black localities and roll back democratically authorized criminal-legal and police reforms. **We call on you to fight this trend and vote NO on H.R. 5107 and H.R. 5214.** If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Rob Randhava of The Leadership Conference at randhava@civilrights.org or Nicole Zayas Manzano of The Bail Project at nicolezm@bailproject.org.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The Bail Project
Advancement Project
Black Voters Matter Fund
Center for Policing Equity (CPE)
DC Vote
Human Rights Campaign
Interfaith Alliance
Juvenile Law Center
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Churches
National Education Association
National Organization for Women
NCNW
Pax Christi USA
Prison Policy Initiative
St. Joseph Justice Center - A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange
Vera Institute of Justice