



RUSA Bill S20-13

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Sponsors: Legislative Affairs Committee

Solidarity and Call to Action Act

| *Legislation Affairs Provision* |

Whereas, our nation has undoubtedly suffered crimes against the humanity and decency of Americans at the hands of those who were sworn to protect us, the Rutgers University Student Assembly (RUSA or the Assembly) must stand together to ensure the safety and well-being of our diverse student body. Our diversity is what gives us perspective. Our differences are what give us strength;

Whereas, the Assembly has been witness to violence that has threatened our country and values to their core, we, as representatives of the Rutgers student body, must do whatever it takes to make sure that this violence never reaches the Raritan;

Whereas, police violence, discriminatory behavior, and systematic inequality have historically been targeted against communities of color¹;

Whereas, for young people of color, police use of force is among the leading causes of death and Black individuals are by far the most common victims²;

Whereas, the numerous incidents of police brutality and systemic racism have acted as a catalyst for nationwide protests against police violence;

¹ [Center for American Progress](#): Systematic Inequality and American Democracy. By Danyelle Solomon, Connor Maxwell, and Abril Castro. Published 7 August 2019.

² [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#): Risk of being killed by police use of force in the United States by age, race-ethnicity, and sex. By Frank Edwards, Hedwig Leeb, and Michael Esposito. Published 3 July 2019.

Whereas, many of the problems regarding race and representation of the Black community at Rutgers stems from a lack of student representation within the administration;

Be it resolved, that the Rutgers University Student Assembly commends the courageous and outstanding efforts by the University of Minnesota Student Government and their President, Jael Kerandi, in pushing for substantive reform in response to these abhorrent events³;

Be it further resolved, that the Rutgers University Student Assembly strongly condemns unjust violence of any form towards protesters of police violence, those affiliated with people protesting police violence, and/or those who are not involved in the aforementioned protests, including:

- a) Unwarranted or attempted violence committed by law enforcement against protestors;
- b) And/or unwarranted or attempted violence committed by civilians, specifically White nationalist and White supremacist groups which have committed violence against protestors;

Be it further resolved, that the Assembly notes that the vast majority of violence committed over the past weeks has been conducted by police officers and provocateurs against the protestors, and that the Assembly additionally condemns groups who create unnecessary, though not necessarily violent, conflict including, but not limited to:

- a) White supremacist groups including, but not limited to:
 - a) Neo-Nazi Groups,
 - b) White nationalist groups,
 - c) Identitarian Groups,
 - d) Alt-Right Groups,
 - e) 'Race-Realist' Groups;
 - f) And Confederate heritage organizations;

Be it further resolved, that the Legislative Affairs Committee is tasked with formulating a report containing a proposal for action on the local, state, and/or federal levels, and specifically addressing the Rutgers University Police Department and discriminatory actions against Black and African-American communities at Rutgers, and whereby this report:

- a) Will be written with the goal of creating policy proposals which seek to prevent police brutality and discrimination from law enforcement of any form or kind;
- b) Will present policies which, upon presentation and approval by the Assembly, will be utilized to persuade legislators to adopt such proposals;
- c) And will address multiple topics surrounding the criminal justice system, including but not limited to:
 - i) An analysis of white supremacist groups and how such groups interact with law enforcement;
 - ii) An analysis of current training methods required for law enforcement around the state and country;
 - iii) An analysis of how internal biases impact how law enforcement act towards Black individuals;

³ [University of Minnesota Undergraduate Student Body President](#): Response to the Murder of George Floyd. *By Jael Kerandi. Published 26 May 2020.*

- iv) And an examination of the funding of police departments on a statewide level.

Be it further resolved, that the Assembly commends the creation⁴ of the Ad-Hoc on Diversity and Inclusion, as created by President Nicholas LaBelle under Executive Order 2020-03⁵, and which will connect the various groups on campus which promote our diversity and which will take substantive action on issues pertinent to these groups;

Be it further resolved, that the Assembly, through the Legislative Affairs Committee, will further pursue legislation and action in accordance with the philosophy and intent of the Community Oriented Review Board (C.O.R.B.) resolution⁶ through:

1. Continue to work with student and minority groups on campus to examine the selection of members of the Rutgers University Police Departments;
2. Advocate for taking the Community Oriented Review Board resolution to its completion by working with the Rutgers University Police Department to formally add the members of the Assembly, United Black Council, and Latino Student Council to the C.O.R.B..
3. Working with officials and administrators within the Rutgers University Police Department and New Brunswick Police Department to ensure that officers are trained in de-escalation techniques, and that officers are held accountable to stop the harassment and inappropriate treatment of Black groups on which has been noted by many on-campus;
4. And making the following a part of the hiring process of new officers and review process of current officers of the Rutgers University Police Department:
 - a. Screening officers for certain untreated or unmanaged disorders including, but not limited to, personality disorders, mood disorders, psychotic disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder;
 - b. Review of social media accounts in order to find any alarming, disturbing, or otherwise insensitive posts;
 - c. Ensuring that those with prior histories of abuse or misconduct may not be hired or re-hired by the Rutgers University Police Department;
 - d. And the publication of any and all reports of misconduct.

Be it further resolved, that the Assembly, through the Legislative Affairs Committee, does endorse and will advocate for the following pieces of legislation at the state and federal levels:

1. H.R. 4408 as presented by Representative Hakeem Jeffries (D) (NY-8)⁷, otherwise known as the Eric Garner Excessive Use of Force Prevention Act of 2019;

⁴ Action was taken pursuant to Art. IV Sec. 7 and Art. IV Sec. 7(b) of the Standing Rules, which allow for ad-hoc committees to be created as per a “decision of the President” and which allows for the Chair to be selected “by a method specific by the President” if the President created the Committee.

⁵ [EO 2020-03](#) -- EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING DNI DEPARTMENT

⁶ [RUSA Resolution F19-04](#): Resolution to Add Three Students to the Community Oriented Review Board (CORB). *By Isaac Velez and Marc Younker. Passed by the Rutgers University Student Assembly Fall 2019.*

⁷ [116th Congress](#): H. R. 4408 - Eric Garner Excessive Use of Force Prevention Act of 2019. *By Representative Hakeem Jeffries (D) (NY-8), et. al.. Introduced 19 September 2019 in the House Committee on the Judiciary.*

2. Representative Ayanna Pressley’s (D) (MA-7) House of Representatives resolution that condemns “all acts of police brutality, racial profiling, and the use of excessive and militarized force throughout the country”⁸;
3. State Senator Patrick Diegnan (D) (LD-18)’s proposal⁹ to provide two Rutgers students with votes on the university’s board of governors, in the hopes that this increased level of student involvement and oversight will be able to lead to long-term, substantive reform across all three campuses;
4. S. 1938 as presented by Senator Tammy Duckworth (D) of Illinois¹⁰, otherwise known as the Police Training and Independent Review Act of 2019
5. And Senator Cory Booker and Kamala Harris’s bill entitled the Justice in Policing Act of 2020 with the stated goal “To hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct in court, improve transparency through data collection, and reform police training and policies.

Be it finally resolved, that the Rutgers University Student Assembly and the members thereof will do all that it can within its power to assure that our officials are held accountable for our broken and bigoted criminal justice system, and that those most oppressed and silenced by our institutions are given a voice.

⁸ [116th Congress](#): [submitted] - Condemning all acts of police brutality, racial profiling, and the use of excessive and militarized force throughout the country. *By Ayanna Pressley (D) (MA-7). Unsubmitted to committee.*

⁹ [219th Legislature](#): S. 2408 - Adds two student representatives to the board of governors of Rutgers University. *By Senator Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. (D) (D-18, Middlesex). Introduced 7 May 2020 in the Senate Higher Education Committee.*

¹⁰ [116th Congress](#): S. 1938 - The Police Training and Independent Review Act of 2019. *By Senator Tammy Duckworth (D) of Illinois, et. al.. Introduced 20 June 2019 in the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.*