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“Divine Justice Requires Strong Policing Reform” Mass. Council of Churches supports African Methodist Episcopal ministers

Boston, Massachusetts: As the Massachusetts Legislature anticipates a consensus, omnibus bill on policing reform from the Conference Committee, the Massachusetts Council of Churches joined African Methodist Episcopal ministers from across the Commonwealth in calling for strong, policing reform.

Sending [a letter to the six Conference Committee members](#), Mass. Council of Churches leaders wrote, “we write to you as Christian leaders convinced that God and history will judge us by the decisions and actions of public leaders at this moment. You who write laws can bend the arc of justice with your pens.”

Earlier this week, [the African Methodist Episcopal ministers implored the Conference Committee members](#), writing, “We recognize that both the House of Representatives and the Senate have made meaningful attempts to respond to the demands for justice in light of the recent murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. We also recognize that the respective bills miss key opportunities to address decades long policing practices that have caused harm to people in communities of color, many of whom are our congregants.”

Both groups of clergy implored the Conference Committee members to release a bill with the all four of the demands of the [Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus](#), including: an independent investigatory police decertification system with majority people of color; a commission to study the civil service exam and other necessary reforms to promote equity, diversity and transparency in police workforce; serious limits on police use of force; and a commission on structural racism. The clergy also are seeking meaningful limits to qualified immunity and include the House version of the ban on face surveillance technology.

Religious leadership across the Commonwealth has been growing in support of comprehensive, meaningful policing reform, with such diverse organizations at the [Massachusetts Catholic Conference](#) and [Greater Boston Interfaith Organization](#) voicing support.

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