

Lawyers' Committee praises Federal Court Ruling NYPD's stop and frisk practices unconstitutional

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Yesterday, a federal district court judge declared that the New York City Police Department's controversial stop and frisk practices are unconstitutional. Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law President and Executive Director Barbara Arnwine issued the following statement applauding the court's ruling in the case, *Floyd v. City of New York*:

"The court's decision is a promising step toward administering justice more fairly and equitably in New York City. Today, the court recognized that racial profiling can no longer be tolerated and held the New York City Police Department responsible for changing these discriminatory practices. We are disturbed that the New York City Police Department has deliberately targeted people of color based on their race, a practice that the court found to be intentionally discriminatory and unconstitutional. We commend the NYCLU, the Center for Constitutional Rights and all of the plaintiffs and the brave law enforcement officers who pursued this litigation seeking to stop this unjust policy. The Lawyers' Committee calls upon all police departments throughout the nation to re-examine the need for stop and frisk policies and to eliminate racial profiling in the operation of any such policies.

Throughout our nation, innocent people of color are far too often victims of racial profiling in violation of their Fourth and Fourteenth Amendment rights. Between 2004 and 2012, the New York City Police Department made 4.4 million stops, and over 80% of those who were stopped were black or Hispanic. The Lawyers' Committee is encouraged by the appointment of an independent monitor to oversee the reform process in New York City. The independent monitor will play a key role in changing law enforcement policies, ensuring effective implementation, and preventing future racial profiling.

The Lawyers' Committee is also pleased that the court has recognized the essential role of community involvement in overhauling police practices. Under the court order, the police department will receive input from a wide range of stakeholders, including communities most affected by racial profiling. By empowering citizens to help shape law enforcement reforms, we believe the court's ruling will ultimately result in more reasonable police practices, greater trust between residents and police, and safer neighborhoods."

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (Lawyers' Committee), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. We are celebrating our 50th anniversary in 2013 as we continue our quest of "Moving America Toward Justice." The principal mission of the Lawyers' Committee is to secure, through the rule of law, equal justice under law, particularly in the areas of fair housing and fair lending; community development; employment; voting; education and environmental justice. For more information about the Lawyers' Committee, visit www.lawyerscommittee.org