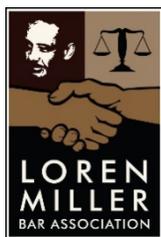


June 27, 2017



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For Immediate Release

Re: Death of Charleena Lyles

Seattle, WA — On Sunday, June 18th, two Seattle police officers arrived at the home of Charleena Lyles, who had called police for help. They shot and killed her within feet of her children. This tragedy could have been avoided and represents multiple failures at multiple levels: the failure of first responders to deescalate tense situations; the failure of mental health services; and ultimately, a failure of justice.

The Loren Miller Bar Association (LMBA) executive board and membership send our thoughts and prayers to Charleena Lyles's children, extended family and the broader community — all of whom have tragically lost another special human life. LMBA is a statewide civil rights organization of lawyers, formed in Seattle in 1968 and named after famed civil rights attorney Loren Miller, who successfully argued *Shelley v. Kraemer*, 334 U.S. 1 (1948). LMBA is Washington's affiliate chapter of the National Bar Association — the oldest minority bar association and largest organization of African American attorneys in the United States, founded in 1925 when the American Bar Association was racially segregated. For 50 years, LMBA's mission has been to advance the social and economic well-being of people of color, while improving relations between the legal profession and the community. In 2010, LMBA signed the [letter](#) calling for the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to investigate Seattle Police Department's (SPD) practices in response to the police killing of John T. Williams and after having witnessed 18 months of other incidents in which SPD used unnecessary and excessive physical force on members of the public.

Today, LMBA stands for Charleena Lyles and the family she left behind by demanding answers. We demand to know how officers, aware of Ms. Lyles's mental health history, could respond with deadly force. We demand to know how their actions comport with the expectations on the SPD under its Consent Decree with the DOJ. We demand to hear from SPD Chief O'Toole directly about this incident in a public forum where Ms. Lyles's family and our community can question her and the Department. Above all, we demand justice and to know how those responsible for this tragic loss of life will be held accountable.

In the wake of the 2016 SPD killing of Che Taylor — with the recent decision of the inquest jury that the officers were justified in killing him even though he was complying with their directions, and the prosecutor's decision not to file criminal charges — Ms. Lyles's killing is another troubling example of the institutional and structural racism in our country. While SPD continues to debate whether officers should wear body cameras and state leaders fight with each other over Use of Deadly Force reform, brown and black people continue to die at the hands of those sworn to protect and serve us.

The Seattle City Council will hold a public meeting on Tuesday, June 27, 2017 at 6 p.m. at the University of Washington. We find it disappointing that Chief O'Toole and SPD are not committed to participating or even attending Tuesday's meeting. Nonetheless, we will be there because we are interested in the outcomes of all the investigations into Ms. Lyles's killing and in the response from our local, state and federal officials. LMBA will be there Tuesday — and we will have questions. We encourage everyone who believes in social justice to attend and bear witness for Charleena Lyles.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at: lmba.vp@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Rob Saka
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Secretary/Treasurer
Loren Miller Bar Association
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