



For Immediate Release

INDIGNATION & DESPAIR: NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE & ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE ALLOW WHITE SUPREMACY TO THRIVE

May 21, 2024

Indignation and despair are the only words to describe our feelings after reading the New Jersey Office of the State Comptroller ("OSC")'s Ninth Review on Law Enforcement Professional Standards. Every day that continues to go by without intentional, forceful action in furtherance of the OSC's May 21, 2024 recommendations is another day in which white supremacy and racial discrimination are allowed to thrive and flourish.

Make no mistake. OSC investigated the New Jersey State Police ("NJSP") and the Office of the Law Enforcement Professional Standards ("OLEPS") within the Attorney General's Office and found clear evidence that both NJSP and OLEPS have known for years that NJSP was likely engaging in wide-spread patterns of discriminatory policing. They not only received this data and did nothing, they were bombarded with the evidence year after year and took conscious efforts to ignore or bury the data. OSC Acting State Comptroller Kevin Walsh acted with bravery and intestinal fortitude in writing this current report. Perhaps, it is this exact courage that keeps Acting Comptroller Walsh from being appointed and confirmed into a full cabinet position.

We have long known racial bias—whether implicit or not—has plagued Black and Brown community members' interactions with NJSP. For decades, we have shouted it from the rooftops and demanded action. Policy makers up and down the chain of command made promise after promise to investigate and do something. We begged, marched, and cried for action. Awards were given and careers were advanced based on these promises. Yet despite these assurances, oftentimes made while looking us in the eye, no meaningful change has actually occurred. Tell us: how can we feel anything but indignation and despair?

OSC makes clear New Jersey is facing an existential crisis in its policing. A crisis that emanates from the top and rots these institutions to the core. Even when OSC was implementing its legislative mandate, NJSP and OLEPS intentionally hid documents and circumvented plain law—without any consequence. When the Open Public Records Act and public transparency in New Jersey is facing fundamental assault and is in a state of emergency, these institutions must be held accountable.

It is for these reasons that the NAACP New Jersey State Conference unequivocally calls on NJSP Colonel Patrick Callahan to resign. His seven-year tenure as Colonel has long exceeded his ability to effectively lead and manage NJSP. The State Police's failures as outlined by OSC falls on Colonel Callahan's lap, and he has utterly failed to meet the moment.

Additionally, the NAACP New Jersey State Conference calls on Attorney General Matthew Platkin to personally take responsibility for the failures of his Office. OLEPS's flagrant disregard to monitor and respond to NJSP's discriminatory responses is nothing less than a failure that requires accountability. Attorney General Platkin must now meet the moment. Justice requires nothing less.



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ABOUT THE NAACP

The NAACP advocates, agitates, and litigates for the civil rights due to Black America. Our legacy is built on the foundation of grassroots activism by the biggest civil rights pioneers of the 20th century and is sustained by 21st century activists. From classrooms and courtrooms to city halls and Congress, our network of members across the country works to secure the social and political power that will end race-based discrimination. That work is rooted in racial equity, civic engagement, and supportive policies and institutions for all marginalized people. We are committed to a world without racism where Black people enjoy equitable opportunities in thriving communities.