

Media Advisory for Tuesday, June 30th at 10:30 AM

Contact: Joe Delgado, 310-704-9312
Roxane Marquez, 213-705-1078

USC Students, Clergy, Labor, and Community Groups to Caravan to USC Department of Public Safety to Demand University Abolish Police Force

Hundreds to Caravan and Hold Press Conference Calling on the University to End the Rampant Over Policing of Black and Brown Students and Community Members by Disbanding USC Police, Reinvest Funds to Support Affordable Housing; End Restrictive Campus Security Measures

LOS ANGELES, CA – Hundreds of students, community members, clergy, and labor allies will lead a car caravan through South Los Angeles to the USC Department of Public Safety to hold a press conference demanding the university take immediate steps to abolish the USC police force and reinvest those funds in affordable housing for the surrounding community.

The coalition, led by Creating Justice, ACCE, USC Forward, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, is also calling for an end to restrictive campus security measures aimed at keeping local residents out of USC facilities, and a commitment by the university to recruit and admit at least 1,000 students annually from South Los Angeles and Boyle Heights, with full scholarships.

The USC Department of Public Safety operates through an agreement with the Los Angeles Police Department, and is one of the largest campus police forces in the nation, with a whopping \$50 million annual budget. USC administrators have done little to address over policing and racial profiling on campus, despite substantial judgments levied against the Department of Public Safety in recent years.

WHAT: Car caravan and press conference calling on USC to abolish police force.

WHEN: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 10:30 AM

WHERE: USC Department of Public Safety, 3667 McClintock Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90089

WHO: Creating Justice, ACCE, USC students, clergy, labor, and South LA residents

VISUALS: Hundreds of cars decorated with signs, flags, and window paint, banners featuring coalition demands, oversized demand letter

Background:

A Legacy of Racial Profiling on Campus

The Department of Public Safety has struggled with over policing and racial profiling in recent years, including an incident in 2013, where over 100 officers in full riot gear, in coordination with LAPD, targeted an end-of-year party attended by predominately black and brown students. The incident

happened mere blocks away from a larger party attended by mostly white students, which was not shut down. Students arrested that night were eventually awarded \$450,000 in damages.

In March 2019, investigative reporter Sahra Sulaiman interviewed approximately 50 male youth between age 14 and 25 over the course of a month and a half. She found that “there was not a single [community member] that had not had some kind of negative encounter with USC DPS, including kids who were hassled while waiting on campus for parents who worked there.”

Department Leadership Fails to Hold Bad Actors Accountable

In December 2019, LAPD detective Alma Burke became the Assistant Chief of the USC Police Department. Prior to joining USC, Burke headed the investigation into the officer involved shooting that led to the death of Ezell Ford. While Ford’s death at the hands of police caused an uprising in Los Angeles, Burke’s report concluded “the officers acted lawfully in self-defense and in defense of others when they used deadly force against Ezell Ford.” This failure to hold bad actors accountable for excessive force is particularly troubling given her new position atop the University’s police department.

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