

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, May 27 2020

Contact: Louie Tan Vital, 425-330-5787, louie@megaphonestrategies.com; Cabot Petoia, 828-899-9239, cabot@megaphonestrategies.com

Statement: “Minnesotans Are Paying The Price For Deadly Force By Officers”

***** To book an interview, please contact louie@megaphonestrategies.com *****

Detroit -- *In response to the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, Action Center on Race and the Economy ([ACRE](#)) released the following statement:*

“In case the full horror of the situation is not already clear from the video: the city of Minneapolis invested George Floyd’s own tax dollars into increasing the police force that killed him on Monday,” **said Maurice BP-Weeks, Co-Executive Director of [ACRE](#)**. “George Floyd should be alive -- yet police violence, fueled by an ideology protecting property and commerce and driven by white supremacy has murdered yet another Black man.”

“The fact that George was killed soon after the Minneapolis City Council voted unanimously to increase the police budget and ramp up efforts to recruit more officers -- even though residents were [vocally opposed](#) to this decision -- is particularly disgusting. Just as the Mayor and City Council ignored the voices of residents, the police ignored the witnesses’ cries for compassion for George Floyd.

“The Minneapolis Police Department’s budget increased between 2019 and [2020](#) by 4.5%, from \$184.9 million to \$193.3 million. The rationale for this increase was ‘to provide public safety of all communities, enhance community engagement, communication, and collaboration to address safety issues.’ These words are sickening. Officers killed George Floyd in broad daylight as other Minnesotans watched and begged them to stop. The budget increase to recruit new officers and buy new body cams only led to George Floyd’s brutal killing. Whose safety did they protect?

“The police force has cost Minneapolis taxpayers over \$45 million dollars in lawsuit settlements, and yet, the Mayor and Council voted to increase the budget and the police force. Officer Derek Chauvin — who has a record of using deadly and excessive force — murdered George Floyd as dozens watched and cried out for him to be let go. The people of Minnesota are not being served by this system.

“Another officer seen in the video, Tou Thao, has also committed acts of brutality against civilians, one of which resulted in a \$25,000 settlement. Minnesota policy allows for officers to appeal such decisions and have their employment reinstated by independent arbitrators.

“With a large amount of settlement money coming from the city's self-insurance fund, city departments pay into the fund with money they get directly from the public in user fees or indirectly through property taxes.

“Lawsuit settlement payouts funded by taxpayers means the city is forcing taxpayers to inadvertently pay for the police brutality that killed George Floyd, while banks and investors profit from Black pain.

“To establish justice and accountability for police violence, the city of Minneapolis must follow these three key recommendations from our report, [*Police Brutality Bonds: How Wall Street Profits from Police Violence*](#)

1. If Minneapolis must borrow to pay for settlements and judgments, banks and investors should not be allowed to profit from that.
2. Police officers must be required to take out individual liability insurance policies to cover the costs of settlements and judgments caused by their misconduct.
3. Governmental bodies at the local, state, and federal levels must account for and provide full transparency about which officers are behaving in ways that lead to settlements and judgments, how they are or are not being held accountable, who is paying for their misconduct and how, and who is profiting from these payments.

“Minnesotans are paying the price for deadly force by officers, both in physical, mental and emotional trauma as well as millions of wasted tax dollars that could be used to provide for the safety and well-being of the community. Instead of listening to residents who were protesting Floyd's murder, the police used tear gas on them.

“This extractive system of police brutality bonds is killing the city and must be abolished. Minnesota leaders have a responsibility to defund deadly police. The four officers who stole George Floyd's life must be held accountable — and not at the expense of Minneapolis' over-policed taxpayers.”

###

The Action Center on Race and the Economy (ACRE) is a campaign hub for organizations working at the intersection of racial justice and corporate accountability. We provide research and communications infrastructure and strategic support for organizations working on campaigns to win structural change by directly taking on the corporations that are responsible for pillaging communities of color, devastating working-class communities, and harming our environment.