

PRESS RELEASE: Wednesday, June 30, 2021

CONTACT: Morgan Keller, Communications Director, ACLU-DE, mkeller@aclu-de.org

Real Police Reform Begins with LEOBOR, Say Advocates

WILMINGTON, DE—Despite widespread support across the state, Senate Bill 149, sponsored by Senator Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman, has stalled for the year. As the first half of the 151st General Assembly’s legislative session concludes today, advocates are sending a clear message to legislators: this year’s legislative action might be ending, but the fight for increased police accountability and transparency through LEOBOR reform won’t slow down.

“Legislators have stalled on passing SB 149, which is the single most important police reform needed in Delaware,” said Haneef Salaam, Delaware Campaign for Smart Justice manager at the ACLU of Delaware. “We’re disappointed that Delaware couldn’t make LEOBOR reform a reality this year, but we’re not giving up. We’ll use this time to continue pushing for meaningful reform and growing support of SB 149, and come back to next year’s legislative session ready to get SB 149 passed as quickly as possible — because the time for LEOBOR reform isn’t next year, it’s right now.”

“Creating a uniform governing policy for body-worn cameras and updating language to the use of force code are two important steps in the right direction on police reform, but without the kind of accountability and oversight that LEOBOR reform provides, those changes will do little to grow communities’ trust in law enforcement,” said Javonne Rich, policy and advocacy director at the ACLU of Delaware. “Body camera footage isn’t helpful if it’s kept secret from the public, and stricter use of force rules don’t do much good if officers know that LEOBOR protects them from the consequences of breaking those rules.”

[According to a new poll by the ACLU and the ACLU of Delaware](#), the vast majority of Delawareans support the changes in SB 149. 71 percent of Delawareans support creating community oversight boards that would investigate and advise on discipline for officers who engage in misconduct, and 68 percent of Delawareans support making Delaware police officers’ disciplinary records available to the public.

“Legislators appear to be prioritizing the comfort of law enforcement over the needs of communities,” said Shyanne Miller of the Delaware Campaign for Fair Policing. “When session returns in January, Delaware’s lawmakers need to remember who they’re elected to represent and come together to deliver on the promise they made more than a year ago: real change, real accountability, and real transparency on policing in Delaware.”

Delaware: Police Accountability NOW campaign partners include ACLU National, ACLU of Delaware, Delaware Campaign for Fair Policing, Delaware Campaign for Smart Justice,



NAACP of Delaware, Network Delaware, Not Just Another Protest, and Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League's Building People Power Campaign.

This press release can be found online here:

<https://www.aclu-de.org/en/news/press-release-lebor-reform-push-continues-2022>

Learn more about the Delaware: Police Accountability NOW campaign here:

<https://www.aclu-de.org/en/our-work/delaware-police-accountability-now>

###