



# Will Merrifield Statement on the death of Deon Kay

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WASHINGTON, DC, USA, September 3, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Yesterday, like far, far too many days before it, a son was killed in the District of Columbia. The tragic violence that occurred yesterday afternoon is an example of the culmination of dehumanizing and racist public policy that failed Deon Kay as a child of the District of Columbia. I grieve the loss of his life, and believe that we must see this event as part of a larger systemic problem encompassing public policy as well as policing. Public policy in DC fails Black youth in its approach to resource allocation, and criminalizes and dehumanizes where it should support and protect. Young people lose out on childhood joys and opportunities to dream as a result.

The call to reallocate resources away from militarized and reactionary policing and toward healthy communities is a call to economic and racial justice. Washington DC is intensely wealthy, unequal, and segregated. In DC, neighborhood public schools in predominantly Black communities have been closed and starved of resources. Despite a booming local economy, unemployment rates among Black Washingtonians is among the highest in the country. And instead of investing from the ground up in Black working-class communities, the District gives hundreds of millions of dollars to developers to demolish these communities and displace thousands of people per year. Healthy communities require resources, and DC has failed to invest in Black people and Black communities in a way that show youth that their leaders give a damn about them.

Mr. Kay's family have lost a son, a nephew, a cousin, a precious life, and deserve to have their questions answered, transparency and justice in the process, and to be shown care and respect by our entire community. My heart remains with them today.

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