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STATE SENATOR FIELDS WORKS TO REDUCE POLICE BRUTALITY AND ENSURE SOUND, UNBIASED LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICIES

“ZERO TOLERANCE POLICE BRUTALITY ACT OF 2021” SET TO BE FILED DURING THE 2021 REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION

District 14 State Senator Cleo Fields (D - Baton Rouge) is calling for the adoption of sound and unbiased law enforcement policies that reduce the disparate impact of police brutality and use of force on minority populations and other historically marginalized communities. To that end, he is authoring legislation to be filed for consideration during the 2021 Regular Legislative Session entitled the *Zero Tolerance Police Brutality Act of 2021*.

"With the recent string of violent acts perpetrated by police around the country on people of color, culminating with the murder of George Floyd in Minnesota, we have to take action," says Fields. "While I'm hopeful that law enforcement training in Louisiana has improved since Alton Sterling's death in 2016, the legislature needs to put teeth in the law to ensure that situations like the one that resulted in Mr. Floyd's death never occur again."

The *Zero Tolerance Police Brutality Act of 2021* will include the following provisions:

- Require uniform enhanced background investigations, including psychological analysis, of potential peace officers.
- Require all law enforcement agencies to establish a uniform early warning system to identify potential issues of misconduct.
- Revocation or reduction of supplemental pay for law enforcement entities that sustain multiple incidents of misconduct and increase supplemental pay for those that don't.

- Enhance criminal penalties for peace officers who utilize excessive force without reasonable cause that results in serious bodily harm.
- Provide for a "duty to intervene" when a peace officer witnesses a fellow peace officer engaging in misconduct.
- Prohibit choke-holds.
- Provide for complaints of misconduct to be submitted online.
- Mandatory use of real-time body cameras when an officer is engaging with a member of the public.
- Enhance the current state registry of police misconduct.
- Provide legislative oversight for the Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (P.O.S.T.) training curriculum with regard to de-escalation, use of force, duty to intervene, community policing, and bias policing recognition.
- Ensure diversity on the P.O.S.T. Council.

“I want those who are out there peacefully protesting to know that you are making a difference,” adds Fields. “We hear you! We see you! Now is the time for us as lawmakers to implement change from a policy perspective.”

The *Zero Tolerance Police Brutality Act of 2021* will be filed prior to the convening of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session next April, which is likely the next available opportunity for the bill to be filed. In the meantime, Fields will continue to meet with stakeholders and seek public engagement on how best to implement these policy changes.

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