

**--- MEDIA ALERT ---**

**The Black Clergy Collaborative of Memphis to Hold Virtual Press Conference to Express Dissent with State Bill Banning Residency Requirements**

**WHAT:**

The Black Clergy Collaborative of Memphis and their president, the Rev. Dr. J. Lawrence Turner, will hold a virtual press conference on Friday, February 26, at noon to express concerns about Senate Bill (SB) 0029 sponsored by Germantown State Representative Brian Kelsey. SB 0029 prohibits residency requirements for police officers and firefighters. This bill will effectively override the Memphis City Council's decision to maintain the City's residency requirement.

While Senator Kelsey contends, "This bill will increase public safety by enabling us to hire more police officers, which will help us fight our rising crime rates." BCCM believes that this is not a proven solution to drive crime rates down. Further, BCCM believes the determination of whether a city/municipality needs a residency requirement is a local decision and views this bill as an intrusion upon the principle of "home rule." In addition, the disregard of a local legislative body will only undermine the community's fragile trust when it comes to criminal justice reform.

BCCM was organized by a group of local African American clergy persons who, as early as May of 2020, proposed a series of policies to city officials that would "reimagine policing" in Memphis. A key for that, they say, involves better understanding and engaging the community. Hiring officers who live outside of the community, even in other states, conflicts with the solutions needed to address the City's law enforcement challenges and is a harmful step in the wrong direction.

**WHO**:

Rev. Dr. J. Lawrence Turner, Founder and President of BCCM Shirley Bondon, Esq., Executive Director of BCCM

And other community leaders…

**WHEN**:

Friday, February 25, 2021, at 12noon

**WHERE:**

Online via Zoom –

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84243858400?pwd=djJVQ0xSMUh6a1U1dkpQazN4R1lYZz09 Meeting ID: 842 4385 8400

Passcode: 564680

**CONTACT:**

Shirley Bondon, Esq. – 901-701-7842 ext 901 [blackclergycollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:blackclergycollaborative@gmail.com)