



March 1, 2021

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write in strong support of H.R. 1280, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021. Police violence is a critical public health issue and this legislation includes a number of important provisions to reduce police violence in the United States. The bill would reform policing and demand a higher level of accountability from officers through provisions that create a national, publicly-accessible registry of police officer misconduct, ban no-knock warrants in drug cases, ban chokeholds and carotid holds, limit the transfer of military-grade equipment to police departments, mandate training on racial profiling and racial bias and create new standards for allowable use of force. The bill would also empower local communities to reimagine public safety with the use of public safety innovation grants to encourage the development of just and equitable approaches and alternatives by community-based organizations.

Racial profiling by some police officers and the resulting brutality and violence continue to result in disproportionate harm to the health of individuals and communities of color, especially Black communities. Racism is a longstanding systemic structure in this country that must be dismantled through brutally honest conversations, policy changes and practices. H.R. 1280 would enact much-needed police reforms and lay the groundwork for future action to address the systemic racism in many of our institutions.

This legislation is an important step toward preventing police violence and the harm it has done to Black communities and other communities of color. We urge you to support H.R. 1280 when it comes to the House floor for a vote and we look forward to working with Congress on additional efforts to address and eliminate police violence and racism in our nation.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director