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C/O Freedom- Unlimited 2201 Wylie Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-758-7898

June 21, 2018

Hon. Josh Shapiro, Attorney General of Pennsylvania
16th Floor, Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Hon. Stephen A. Zappala, Jr., District Attorney
Allegheny County
303 Allegheny County Courthouse
Pittsburgh, PA 15219-2489

Coleman McDonough, Superintendent,
Allegheny County Police Department
875 Greentree Road
Ten Parkway Center, Suite 100
Pittsburgh, PA 15220

Re: Shooting of Antwon Rose, Jr. by an East Pittsburgh Police officer

Dear Attorney, General Shapiro; Allegheny County District Attorney Zappala, Jr. and Allegheny County Police Department Supt. McDonough:

I was heart broken and quite disturbed, as I'm sure were many area television viewers, after watching the video of the shooting of 17 year old Woodland Hills honor student Antwon Rose by an East Pittsburgh Police officer during a traffic stop in which young Mr. Rose was not the driver of the vehicle that was stopped. I, and the members of the B-PEP Planning Council and the Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence, are outraged at the lethal shooting of yet another unarmed Black man by a law enforcement officer who is sworn to "Protect and Serve".

It's a LIFETIME COMMITMENT...
African Americans VOTE in EACH and EVERY election!!"
Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

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, Jr.

2.

There was, from what we know from the video, absolutely NO threat to *any* of the officers pursuing Mr. Rose and one of the other occupants of the car. The officers were certainly not in danger of losing their lives, or of being injured. Fleeing from an officer should not be justification for any officer to discharge his weapon let alone take a life. Our understanding is the Antwon Rose, Jr. was *struck three* times by the officer in question, who was sworn into service only *hours* before. How is such an action justified? Why did this officer feel the need, or the *right* to take such action? This seems to be a clear case of an absence of sufficient training and a serious lack of judgement.

We are aware of the difficulty a local District Attorney has in investigating and prosecuting a law enforcement officer when he or she must depend on local police officers, on a *regular* basis, to prosecute offenders. Therefore, the Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP) has worked on, and advocated for, what we call the “Due Process Act” which would put all police involved deadly shootings in the hands of the Pennsylvania Attorney General’s office, which we feel would bring about a more objective pursuit of justice. We strongly believe that the deadly shooting of Antwon Rose, Jr. presents such a case, and we request your offices to collectively agree to pass this case onto the Attorney General’s Office of Pennsylvania. The Family of Antwon Rose, Jr. and the community deserve no less than an open and totally *transparent* process for justice. Too many lives are being cut short or impacted, in some cases permanently, by the quick and inappropriate actions of police which frequently occur without the forethought of the *lifelong* consequences they bring about. There have been far too many shootings and killings of unarmed citizens, most often young Black males throughout Western Pennsylvania and throughout the nation. The community demands justice *now* and will settle for nothing less. We cannot see how the death of Antwon Rose can be justified.

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B-PEP and the Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence has also been a supporter, for some time, for the creation of a county-wide Citizen Police Review Board. We join with those who are actively advocating for this cause that we feel would bring about another level of objectivity and review of the actions of officers in the various police departments throughout Allegheny County

3.

In recent years with the leadership from Mayor Bill Peduto, that of our immediate past Police Chief Cameron McClay, that of our current Police Chief Scott Shubert and their leadership teams have partnered together with the community to begin to create a new relationship between the community and the police. Negative incidents between the community and the police have lessened. There is much more work to be done, but we strongly advocate that surrounding police departments emulate such a partnership. Area police departments can begin that relationship by implementing enhanced training of their police force, including the “implicit bias training” that the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police has provided to *every* member of their department. Meanwhile we advocate for our Pittsburgh Police Bureau to continue to expand its training opportunities and to expand the diversity within its department.

The reason why what is known as the “Black Lives Matter” movement came about is not because White lives don’t matter. It came about because far too many people, including far too many police officers across this nation, *don’t* believe that Black lives DO matter!! Many of us can’t help but wonder if the White officer who shot three bullets into the unarmed Antwon Rose would have done so if Antwon were a White 17-year-old youth, instead of being yet *another* Black 17-year-old youth running from the police!

Whatever organization in the end conducts the investigation of the death of Antwon Rose, Jr. that investigation *must* be comprehensive, transparent, complete, and with an eye toward justice!

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In this time of political and societal hurricanes the Black Political Empowerment Project and the Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence stand together united to change the tide of hate and division which is destroying our communities and destroying our nation!

Sincerely,

**Tim Stevens, Chairman & CEO
The Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)
Co-convener, Greater Pittsburgh Coalition Against Violence (CAV)
412-758-7898**

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