

Black Lives Matter Co-Founder Denied Position on the LASD Civilian Oversight Commission**For Immediate Release:** October 31, 2016**Contact:** Mark-Anthony Johnson (818) 259-1322 **Spanish Liaison:** Guadalupe Chavez (323) 979-6550**Press Conference:** Tuesday, 11/1, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration 500 W Temple St, 8:30 AM3655 S. Grand Ave.
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Los Angeles, CA – When the County Board of Supervisors announce their appointees to the new Civilian Oversight Commission tomorrow, they will not say Patrisse Cullors' name. The oversight commission--charged with producing more transparency and accountability from the sheriff's department--is the product of a three year campaign waged by Dignity and Power Now's Coalition to End Sheriff Violence which was founded by Patrisse Cullors.

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In 2011, Cullors created the Coalition to End Sheriff Violence and was later awarded the Contribution to Oversight Award by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). The Coalition to End Sheriff Violence is now made up of over 30 Los Angeles based organizations, including the ACLU of Southern California and the Youth Justice Coalition. When the coalition chose to sponsor nominees for the commission, they immediately nominated Patrisse.

Despite her instrumental role in organizing local communities to demand the implementation of the commission, the County Board of Supervisors have deemed Cullors' role as founder of the Black Lives Matter Global Network as a conflict of interest. They did not, however, cite conflicts of interest for former law enforcement appointees Robert C. Bonner, former Administrator of the DEA and Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and former Sheriff's Department Lieutenant JP Harris. Having worked alongside Cullors and other Los Angeles organizers, both Rabbi Heather Miller and Loyola Law School Associate Professor Priscilla Ocen were nominated by the Coalition to End Sheriff Violence and have been appointed to the commission.

"This commission will oversee the largest sheriff's department in the country and has a unique opportunity to set a national trend," said Mark-Anthony Johnson, Director of Wellness at Dignity and Power Now. "With police-initiated deaths of Black people reaching an all time high and continued prejudicial practices in jails cross the country, now is the time for impacted communities to have a direct say in a body aimed at reducing civil and human rights violations by the sheriff's department."

This commission has the opportunity to give civilians the ability to reduce abuses in the largest jail system in the world and yet it falls short of other civilian oversight bodies across the country. From Newark to Baltimore to Chicago to New York, communities are pressing for independent oversight with subpoena and disciplinary power. The Los Angeles commission alarmingly lacks both.

Black Lives Matter and Dignity and Power Now advocate for an end to violence against Black people that is sanctioned by the state. Both are working on the frontline of a movement that holds accountable law enforcement who violate the fundamental human rights of Black people. The sheriff's department has proven time and again that they cannot achieve this without meaningful and independent oversight.

Mark-Anthony Johnson continues, "To deny someone as highly qualified and deserving as Patrisse while at the same time appointing former law enforcement including a former Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy raises serious concerns about whether this commission will protect incarcerated Black and Brown people which is what Patrisse and the community urgently fought for."

Patrisse and representatives from the Coalition to End Sheriff Violence will speak and be available for interviews as part of the supervisors' official appointee announcement Tuesday at 8:30 AM in front of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 W Temple St.