



A VISION FOR BLACK LIVES: **POLICY DEMANDS FOR BLACK POWER, FREEDOM, & JUSTICE**

The Demilitarization of Law Enforcement, Including Law Enforcement in Schools and on College Campuses

What is the problem?

- Under the Department of Defense's (DOD) Excess Property 1033 Grant program, more than \$4 billion in military grade equipment has been issued to local police departments, and colleges and universities across the country.
- This is equipment that ranges from nuts and bolts for everyday repairs in the office and in automobiles, to grenade launchers that have been fitted for tear gas canisters and 19-ton mine resistant armored trucks.
- There is little transparency in which police departments and campuses receive what equipment, and there is even less information that is available that conveys a reason why a police and campus safety departments may need such equipment.
- Over the past few years, we have seen this military grade equipment used in our own backyards —specifically on Black and Brown people in the U.S.
- In the spring of 2015, President Obama put forth [Executive Order 13688](#). The executive order helps to mitigate the optic of a militarized police, but leaves massive loopholes for local law enforcement and states. For example, it will only address the issue of campus police militarization if university presidents collectively demand it.
- In summer 2016, the Dallas Police Department used an unmanned robot armed with a bomb to detonate a man accused of killing multiple police officers. The precedent set here is one that warrants thought, discussion, and accountability from the federal government and law enforcement agencies.

What does this solution do?

- Demilitarize local law enforcement on and off college campuses.
- Provides greater transparency around the flow of weapons to local police departments.
- Create greater measures of accountability for law enforcement.

Federal Action:

- Target: Legislative
- Process: Our main audience for general law enforcement should be federal elected officials who often support local law enforcement in acquiring these materials. The ideal national policy is one that bans the transfer of material and immediately creates greater transparency. Hank Johnson recently introduced the [Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act of 2015 \(H.R. 1232\)](#), that would place restrictions and transparency measures on the Department of Defense (DOD) program that transfers excess military equipment to state and local law enforcement agencies.



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- Target: Department of Defense (DOD)
- Process: We should also look to influence the DOD to raise the threshold for demonstrated need for local law enforcement agencies and border patrol agents to use these materials on unarmed undocumented immigrants and to police the U.S.- Mexico border.

Local Action:

- Target: Local Elected Officials
- Executive Order 13688 essentially leaves it up to local elected officials to be a major determining factor in whether or not their local police get access to 1033 equipment. We need to create levels of transparency so that local communities know what equipment their officers have access to, as well as who authorized the acquisition of that equipment.
- Target: University Presidents
- We should concentrate on college and university presidents to demand policy changes that directly impact their campus law enforcement agencies, and we should demand that they are accountable to their students and their families by explicitly making them aware of the equipment the school has access to. This creates organizing opportunities for students as well as faculty. Further, there have been more and more arguments to arm campus police to appease the fear of a mass shooter. Campuses that allow guns on campus are only causing campus law enforcement to demand armament, creating a vicious cycle of firearms in higher education.

Model Legislation

- Recently passed [New Jersey State legislation](#) requires law enforcement agencies to obtain the permission of local governments before obtaining equipment through the 1033 program. This legislation, however, doesn't stop the flow of weapons.
- Proposed [legislation in New Hampshire](#), while limiting the ability to obtain new military grade equipment, does not call for restricting the use of previously purchased military grade equipment. Potential legislation may benefit from such a provision.

Resources:

- [The Danger of Militarizing Campus Police Forces](#)
- [To Make Our Communities Safer, We Must Rethink Policing](#)
- [Recommendations Pursuant to Executive Order 13688: Federal Support for Local Law Enforcement Equipment Acquisition](#)
- [See what military equipment police in Michigan are picking from federal surplus](#)



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- [Bomb Robots: What Makes Killing In Dallas Different And What Happens Next?](#)

Organizations Currently Working on Policy:

- [Million Hoodies Movement for Justice](#)
- Elected officials (Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA) has introduced a bipartisan bill with more than [40 cosponsors](#))
- [ACLU](#)
- The White House

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