



New England Police Benevolent Association
Worcester's Police Officers



New England PBA Local 911

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Daniel Gilbert
President

March 23, 2021

Brain Halloran
Vice President

Press Release

Tim Reynolds
Secretary

To: All Media Outlets, Greater Worcester
From: Worcester's Police Patrolmen Union

William J. Armstrong
Treasurer

Re: Press Release to DA Joseph Early

District Attorney Joseph Early,

On behalf of the Worcester Police Patrol Officers Union - and frankly on behalf of all those who put on body armor and leave their families to protect and keep our cities safe - I write to you to express my disdain and disgust at your decision to drop criminal charges against those who were involved in a riot in June. More than disgust, I want you to know that I am ashamed and disappointed that you have knowingly chosen to turn your back on those of us that have always had your back. I am sure that you recall coming to our organization and asking for our endorsement - promising that you would support us. Once again, we are failed - not only by the elected officials who are always against those of us in public safety, - but by people like you - our friend and colleague.

The public asks us to be the ones out in the middle of the night protecting property, protecting citizens, and protecting ourselves from violent rioters. We did our jobs and now you won't do yours. What message does this tell those who will attack us and the public in the future - that there will be no consequences. That we are of no value to you. That they can take a free shot at any of us? This is not the first time your lack of will to stand up for public safety has endangered police officers. In 2016 - cop killer Jorge Zambrano had 84 past criminal cases - including a long history of violence against police officers. You offered him probation because you said prison was not working for him. While free, he murdered Auburn Police Officer and hero Ron Tarentino. Ron's funeral was well attended by political folks pledging support for police officers - where are they now? Even after that we gave you our support - but again, you are turning your back on us. How many police officers need to be murdered for you to support us?

This riot resulted in police officers being assaulted with commercial grade fireworks, rocks, flares, and one person on the roof of a building with Molotov cocktails. This riot also had buildings vandalized including City Hall and a number of businesses. One officer who was in his police cruiser on Hammond Street had to stop traffic from entering Main Street - so that those walking could avoid being hit by cars. The officer's cruiser was eventually surrounded by those involved in the riot that then started shaking the marked police cruiser with the officer still in the vehicle.

Don't you care about Worcester area police officers? National studies have

concluded that policing is one of the most mentally taxing occupations, contending with long and often rotating shifts, threats of violence, and most recently a lack of public support creating chronic stress. Mental health problems among law enforcement personnel are associated with higher exposure to traumatic events and subsequent post-traumatic stress disorder. Consequently, law enforcement officers are more likely than the general population to suffer from depression, experience familial strife, misuse alcohol, and attempt suicide. Your lack of support is now adding to this problem.

Mr. Early - for you to say you recused yourself because you teach at Clark University is really an embarrassment to the fine men and women of the Worcester Police department and citizens of Worcester. Where are your priorities? What is more important - the part time Clark University job or the safety of the Worcester Police Officers and the citizens of Worcester.

When you initially ran for district attorney you came to the Worcester Patrolman's Union, NEPBA 911, looking for an endorsement which you received along with the National NEPBA endorsement. I noticed that you still have these accolades listed on your website. I can tell you that you will never receive another endorsement from the NEPBA and further will never receive a vote from me or my family. Even DA Rachel Rollins - who has made her stance regarding police officers clear - would get my vote over you - as she at least has the courage to be honest about her positions.

I want you to know that it pains me greatly to have to express these things to you - but when you consider them - please consider the perspective of those of us standing in harm's way during the riot, our families at home hoping they would see us again. At least with the rioters, we knew who was taking shots at us. Your actions, however, are completely unexpected. We could live with a judge or jury making the call- but hard to support a DA who doesn't even try.

Daniel Gilbert
President NEPBA 911

