NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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Executive Director

December 3, 2014

The Honorable Yvette Clarke
United States House of Representatives
2351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Clarke:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), I write to you to express our extreme disappointment and concern over your decision to make the "Hands up, don't shoot," gesture on the floor of the House of Representatives.

NAPO is a coalition of police unions and associations from across the United States that serves to advance the interests of America's law enforcement through legislative and legal advocacy, political action, and education. Founded in 1978, NAPO now represents more than 1,000 police units and associations, 241,000 sworn law enforcement officers, and more than 100,000 citizens who share a common dedication to fair and effective crime control and law enforcement.

Your actions are not only disrespectful to law enforcement officers, who put their lives on the line every day to protect our nation, but they are also harmful to communities that are trying to heal after weeks of unrest. Much of the community tension that we have witnessed has been caused by false statements about events in Ferguson, which you continue to perpetuate on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Physical evidence has clearly shown that Michael Brown was not attempting to surrender with his hands in the air. Three separate autopsies, including one at the request of Mr. Brown's family, showed that the shots which struck Mr. Brown did so when Mr. Brown was facing and/or in direct physical contact with Officer Wilson. There were no shots while Mr. Brown's hands were up over his head, and further evidence proved that Mr. Brown must have been moving toward Officer Wilson when shot, not away from him. The symbol that you gestured on the House floor is not based on truth.

We have accepted the fact that social media will continue to spread false claims about events in Ferguson, but we are shocked and dismayed that a member of Congress would fuel tension in communities across the country by making false statements on the House floor.

We urge you to stop ignoring the evidence in this case. It is your job to inform the public and pursue legislation that is in the best interest of the nation, not to repeat false statements that will only create more unrest in our communities. As our officers are working to strengthen relationships with the communities that they serve, you are fostering continued conflict. You are not spreading the truth. You are creating havoc and unrest.

If you would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to contact me at: (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,



William J. Johnson
Executive Director