

End qualified immunity once and for all

Gabriela <elgabrielah@gmail.com>

Mon 8/16/2021 3:58 PM

To: Manning, Jacqueline O. (HOU) <Jacqueline.O.Manning@mahouse.gov>

You don't often get email from elgabrielah@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Special Commission on Qualified Immunity

Following the murder of George Floyd and the historic protests last summer in response to countless police killings of Black people, at least 20 states have either already passed, or are considering, bills to end or limit qualified immunity in state courts. Massachusetts must pass legislation that will end qualified immunity without exception.

Qualified immunity has enabled law enforcement and other government employees to escape liability of misconduct for decades. Under this legal defense, victims seeking justice in civil court – oftentimes people seriously injured from, or family members of people killed by, police – are required to find nearly-identical court cases to prove their rights were violated.

Not only does this make it close to impossible to hold an official to account – it fosters an environment where police can feel empowered to violate people's rights with the knowledge they will face few consequences. Qualified immunity is part of an architecture of impunity that lets police act as if they are above the law, and it undermines the purpose of the post-Civil War legislation that sought to give newly-emancipated Black people a vehicle for protecting their rights in court.

It's time for Congress to eliminate this doctrine for good – and begin funneling resources away from law enforcement and into community services like housing, education, accessible health care, and violence prevention programs

Please, close the loophole allowing government officials to escape accountability for violating constitutional rights: Pass legislation that ends qualified immunity once and for all.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Horvay

24 Greenleaves Dr, Unit 419

Amherst, MA 01002