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APALA Stands with Cleveland and DC Efforts to Fight Mass Criminalization

Washington, DC – The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA) commends the tremendous organizing efforts shown today by both Mijente’s #WallOffTrump in Cleveland and the Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100) and Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest against the National Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) in DC. APALA stands in solidarity with these efforts and the broader movements to end the mass criminalization of communities of color.

In Washington, DC, protesters blocked off roads in Northeast on 4th St. and Massachusetts Avenue, lining cross walks and holding up signs demanding an end to the National Fraternal Order of Police, a private union known to protect the interests of officers who brutalize and kill civilians. The FOP boasts more than 330,000 members and recently praised the acquittal of Lt. Rice, a Baltimore police officer involved in the 2015 detainment and murder of Freddie Gray.

“It’s great to see organizers take action in the streets to demand freedom. The FOP promotes harmful, unaccountable and racist policies that allows officers to hide from any culpability for their actions. The deaths of hundreds of black people for simply being black has become all too common. APALA calls for justice and accountability from all law enforcement officers and demands an end to the FOP,” declared APALA National President Johanna Hester.

In Cleveland, OH, Mijente, a Latinx and Chicax organizing group, also led a community effort to create a banner wall spanning two blocks around the Republican National Convention. The #WallOffTrump symbolizes the fight against hateful, xenophobic and racist rhetoric used at the convention and in the larger political climate.

“Trump’s racist, Islamophobic, hateful agenda only serves to further divide an already divided nation and also criminalize people who are not white. What he brings to the table strengthens the White status quo and will certainly be detrimental for people of color, immigrants, and women. We absolutely do need to #WallOffTrump,” added Hester.

“As AAPI allies and co-conspirators, we won’t stand complicit in this system that disproportionately discriminates, devalues and criminalizes Black folks, immigrants and other communities of color. It’s so critical that we work together to dismantle this system that protects those in positions of power and privilege and pivot our organizing efforts to ending the mass criminalization of people of color,” stated APALA Executive Director Gregory A. Cendana.

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The **Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance** (APALA), AFL-CIO was founded in 1992 as the first and only national organization for Asian Pacific American union members to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights.

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