



Durbin Discusses Death Of George Floyd And Gun Violence With 100 Black Men Of Chicago

June 2 2020 9:00 AM

SPRINGFIELD — U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) spoke with 100 Black Men of Chicago yesterday evening about the death of George Floyd and gun violence in Chicago. Durbin shared his outrage over the death of Mr. Floyd and called for answers and accountability.

“It was a reprehensible, heartbreaking moment when I opened up the paper and saw Mr. Floyd on the ground, with an officer with a knee on his neck. It just broke my heart and it enraged me at the same time, to think that we are still coping and dealing with this issue in the United States. We cannot call ourselves a land of justice until we honestly deal with issues of racism and the enforcement of justice,” Durbin said.

Durbin also discussed the toll of gun violence in Chicago and its impact on communities across the city. He called for commonsense gun reform measures – like universal background checks – to stem the spread of firearm violence in the city. He also spoke about the trauma that systemic violence has on children in Chicago, how it affects their futures, and his efforts to support youth violence prevention.

“So what I’ve tried to do, among other things, is to move us towards being more sensitive to this trauma-induced situation that, left unaddressed, can harm healthy development and lead these young people into lives of violence. We need to be more sensitive to it,” Durbin said.

Durbin has led the Senate effort on addressing some of the root causes of violence, such as exposure to trauma. Witnessing violence and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are known to harm healthy development because they over-stress the developing brain. Without supportive environments or care, this can negatively impact health, education, and societal outcomes—and contribute to the cycle of violence and

poverty. To address this, Durbin passed [legislation](#) to help improve identification of and support for children who have experienced trauma.

Durbin also launched the Chicago HEAL Initiative in 2018, which brought together ten of the leading hospitals serving Chicago on 16 public commitments to reduce violence and address health disparities. Their efforts focus on economic and community efforts that are at the root of violence and lack of opportunity—outside their traditional health roles—including local hiring, career development, and procurement, mentorship, housing, hunger, and post-injury counseling. A one-year report on the Chicago HEAL Initiative is available [here](#).

100 Black Men of Chicago is the Chicago chapter of 100 Black Men of America, a 25,000-member volunteer organization that works to enhance quality of life and educational and economic opportunities for African Americans. Chicago Police Superintendent David Brown, University of Chicago Associate Chief of Trauma Dr. Brian Williams, and Dr. Mike McGee, the COVID Chair of 100 Black Men of Chicago, all participated in the conversation with Durbin. CNN reporter Omar Jimenez moderated the discussion with Durbin and 100 Black Men of Chicago.