

The National Lawyers Guild Chicago Board expresses its support for the national [Resolution Supporting the Abolition of Policing](#). We recognize the anti-Black roots and purpose of policing, and its use as a tool to systemically oppress and harm Black people. There is no way to reform an institution so entrenched in oppressive violence.

As the resolution lays out, “U.S. police forces began as slave patrols, protecting the property rights (i.e. legal dominion over Black bodies) of white enslavers, starting with South Carolina in 1690, and then were used to enforce the Black Codes, as well as repress labor movements, and have since always used violence to enforce the “law and order” defined by anti-Blackness, white supremacy, racial capitalism, cisheteropatriarchy, colonialism, and imperialism.”

Chicago has been an epicenter of the brutal and repressive impacts of policing in a variety of contexts. From the anti-labor Haymarket Affair, to the Chicago Police Torture Cases and Black Sites such as Homan Square, to the murder of Black Panther Party Chairman Fred Hampton while he slept, to other targeted policing of Black people every day, and the disproportionate arrests of Black protestors and incommunicado detention, we see policing’s oppressive purpose manifest daily. With these examples, and the police terror committed that we don’t hear about, it is abundantly clear that the Chicago Police Department will never keep Chicagoans safe -- nor will any policing formation.

As grassroots organizers and [survivors of police torture have demonstrated](#), there are ways to organize, win campaigns, and build with each other that reduce the life and scope of policing, don’t further legitimize the institution of policing, and center the needs and experiences of survivors and families of victims of police violence. Particularly within the current political landscape of Black Lives Matter uprisings, we support the call to defund, disband, and completely dismantle all police departments and policing infrastructure. Chicago’s resistance formations of the last few years like Freedom Square, Chicago Torture Justice Center, and the Black Abolitionist Network are showing us what a world without policing can look like.

Despite constant repression from police institutions throughout the country, another world is possible, and being built right now. The Guild must support this visionary work, and eliminating policing is part and parcel.