

DON'T SHOOT COALITION

September 2, 2014

Governor Jay Nixon
Capitol Building Room 218
P.O. Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Sent via Facsimile: 573-526-3291

Dear Governor Nixon:

Together we represent thousands of local community members working for a just, peaceful and safe future for all in the St. Louis area. We write today to respectfully request that you appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the killing of Michael Brown and determine any charges filed against Officer Darren Wilson.

More than 115,000 signatures (and counting) have already been collected through State Senator Jamilah Nasheed's MoveOn.org petition asking Prosecutor Robert P. McCulloch to recuse himself from this case. Those signatures clearly demonstrate the tide of sentiments and viewpoints here and around the country. We write to you today as St. Louis-area people, the people most impacted by this decision, and those who will lead the community out of the turmoil brought by this case.

As you know, in the aftermath of Michael Brown's shooting the public has witnessed sloppiness, irregularity and unprofessional behavior from government officials involved on various levels. We have seen Brown's body left on display for hours after the shooting, information withheld and unjustified use of force against peaceful protesters. These events have resulted in the loss of public confidence in law enforcement and existing systems of oversight.

The purpose behind the appointment of a special prosecutor is to avoid the appearance of impropriety or partiality so that the public can have faith in decisions made by a prosecutor. We do not take a position on Prosecutor McCulloch's ability to impartially investigate this killing. Rather, we believe that based on the handling of this matter thus far, and the overall context of relationships between and among law enforcement agencies, only an independent prosecutor can garner the trust of the public.

We have heard many public officials talk about healing in the community and moving forward after this tragedy. Please understand that without the appointment of the special prosecutor, peace and healing will be elusive. This is the first and primary call for justice made by community members, and you have many reasons to meet it. Aside from the fact that appointing a special prosecutor in such situations is an established best practice, doing so would show that you listen to and care about our people and communities.

Prosecutor McCulloch should not take the request for his recusal as a personal affront. Rather, how he is seen personally depends on his response to the request. Only his recusal can demonstrate his concern for the needs of the community and willingness to open the matter for

the process that has the greatest integrity. Failure to recuse himself from this case will show the opposite.

Governor, let there be no doubt, this is an important moment and turning point in U.S. history, and you have the opportunity to play a defining role. The nation and world are watching your leadership, and your decisions and actions at this time will tie you to the outcomes of the case, good or bad.

We implore you and Prosecutor McCulloch to do the right thing in this situation, and stay on the right side of history. The right thing can help bring peace to the community. The right thing protects the integrity of this investigation and the reputation of the state. The right thing shows the people of Ferguson and Missouri that you understand and care. Please appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Michael Brown's death, in the interest of justice, safety and security for all concerned.

Sincerely,

Don't Shoot Coalition Members:

Advancement Project
AFGE Local 3354
Amnesty International
Coalition Against Police Crimes & Repression
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
Coalition to Abolish the Prison Industrial Complex (CAPIC)
Communications Workers of America, Local 6355
Drone-Free St. Louis
Faith Aloud
Future Fighters
IAMAW Local 1345
Instead of War Coalition
Interfaith Committee on Latin America
JCS - St. Louis
Jobs with Justice, St. Louis Chapter
Justice Institute / Anti-Racism Committee
Latinos En Axion STL
Missouri GSA Network
Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates
Missouri NOW
Missouri Progressive Vote Coalition (Pro Vote)
Missourians Organizing for Reform & Empowerment
New Black Panther Party
Organization for Black Struggle
Peace Economy Project
People Improving Communities Through Organizing (PICO) Network / Live Free

Sabayet
Service Employees International Union Healthcare Missouri (SEIU MO)
Show Me \$15
Show Me No Hate
Sistahs Talkin' Back
Southside STL Supports
St. Louis Catholic Worker Community
St. Louis Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations
St. Louis Jewish Voice for Peace
St. Louis Palestine Solidarity Committee
TEACH
ThoughtWorks, Inc.
UAPO
Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis
Veterans For Peace
#WeThePeople
Young Activists United - St. Louis

Additional Supporters:
St. Louis City Treasurer Tishaura Jones
Ferguson Committeewoman Patricia Bynes
Rep. Michael Butler
Rep. Courtney Allen Curtis
Rep. Rochelle Walton Gray
Senator Jamilah Nasheed
Rep. Sharon Pace

cc: Prosecutor Robert P. McCulloch