



December 23, 2020

Can Chicago Police Change?

Anjanette Young's humiliation by the Chicago Police Department should be a teachable moment for all of us, including the men and women on the Chicago police force. The Chicago police's behavior toward Ms. Young violated her human and constitutional rights, causing Ms. Young on-going anguish, hurt Ms. Young's loved ones, and angers people not only in Chicago but throughout the world. This incident must give pause to the men and women in blue. The disregard of police for Black lives and human dignity should always trigger changes to rules and laws that govern how police can do their job.

Laquan McDonald and Anjanette Young are instances of modern-day lynching of two black people that happened to be caught on video. One instance was deadly, and the other instance killed human pride and dignity. Both instances prove that some police continue to lack the culture and the life experiences to work in Black communities as law enforcement officials. These deficiencies, showing a lack of proper education, family values, and training, will never allow those police who are ignorant to see Black people through the same lens that they see White people in society.

Rule and laws can control behavior by imposing consequences for misconduct, but the real change we need must come from the police themselves. They must learn from the past and seek the educational, mental, and cultural support they need to serve and protect the community. I urge the men and women in blue not to wait for legislation to fix improper behaviors.

Sincerely,

La Shawn K. Ford
State Representative-Eighth District