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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Seattle Women's Commission Expresses its Deep Concern for the Killing of Charleena Lyles

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SEATTLE—This past Sunday, June 18th, Ms. Charleena Lyles was shot and killed by two Seattle Police Department (hereafter SPD) officers in her home with her children. For several years, the Seattle Women's Commission (hereafter the Commission) has advised the City that it believes officers are still significantly undertrained and not adequately equipped to handle situations such as this involving mental health, domestic violence, and sexual assault. Even with the compliance with the Federal Consent Decree and recent legislation passed to improve SPD, our concerns have not been fully assuaged.

Additionally, there is little confidence from this Commission on the SPD's facility to ensure the protection of black women and other women of color as it stands today. We will be joining the Human Rights Commission, Commission for People with disAbilities, LGBTQ Commission, and the Community Police Commission in calling for a full and transparent investigation to make apparent to Ms. Lyles family and the public including:

- whether it is standard procedure to discharge lethal weapons in a home where children are present,
- whether the officers involved were following department procedure in using their lethal force weapons rather than their less lethal options of pepper spray or a taser,
- whether given the fact that it can clearly be heard on the tape that the officers knew who they were interacting with if Ms. Lyles' race was a causative factor in their judgment to use deadly force rather than less deadly means of restraining her,
- whether given the fact that it can clearly be heard on the tape that the officers knew who they were interacting with if Ms. Lyles' past history was a causative factor in their judgment to use deadly force rather than less deadly means of restraining her,
- whether given the fact that it can clearly be heard on the tape that the officers knew who they were interacting with if the officers followed department procedure or were negligent in neglecting to ask for additional support from mental health professionals in assisting Ms. Lyles' when she called the police for help on a non-emergency matter,
- and finally, if the officers here were in compliance with SPD policies and procedures in taking these actions, whether these are the policies and procedures that should govern their conduct.

We will follow the investigation closely, and today issued a letter to the Mayor, City Council, the Chief of Police, and the U.S. Attorney's office to assert our concerns and to push for adequately equipped officers in helping the residents of Seattle. And when we say equipped, we mean officers armed with the best possible training in mental health interventions, domestic and intimate partner violence, and working with sexual assault survivors, not lethal force techniques and who are solely equipped with lethal force weapons while on duty.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Charleena Lyles's family and her community, and we ask for swift, transparent, and ethical justice be served.

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