

# **OPINION: Police reform advocates call for meaningful action from Massachusetts House Speaker DeLeo and MA State Rep. Cronin**

“Police reform advocates from across the Bay State released a powerful, new video today calling upon top leaders in the Massachusetts House of Representatives to advance key racial justice measures in the state legislature’s pending police reform package. That package is currently under negotiations between the two chambers, and advocates say they want to be sure it includes two key “litmus test” measures that will determine in their eyes whether or not the bill represents progress or a punt.

Reverend Maria White-Hammond, who has played a leadership role in the coalition and helped to organize the new video message, said in a statement:

“This is a crucial moment for our state. Thousands of Bay Staters called for racial justice and accountability for police violence and misconduct this summer – but the Legislature has yet to make good on its promise for real reform. Time is running out. We need real action now.”

Meanwhile, the legislature only has 36 days left to pass reform legislation before the end of the current session, which is slated for Saturday, January 2, 2021.

The video urges MA House of Representatives Speaker Robert DeLeo and House Judiciary Chair Claire Cronin to ensure a final police reform package that includes meaningful limits on qualified immunity and a police oversight commission that is

inclusive of racial justice advocates.

“We can’t wait for another tragedy, or for Massachusetts to be a national headline,” the message says. “Speaker DeLeo, [House Conference Committee Chair] Representative Cronin, and the rest of the Legislature’s conference committee members need to stop dragging their feet. It’s time to lead.”

The legislative package, S.2820/H.4886, has been stuck in a conference committee since July, when both the House and Senate passed different versions of a police reform bill following widespread protests across the state in the wake of George Floyd’s death at the hands of police.”

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*Police Reform Now (MA) is a grassroots coalition of civil rights, religious, labor, and other grassroots organizations that advocate for legislative solutions to address the concerns of overpoliced communities and to ensure there is greater transparency in policing.*

For more information: [www.policereformnowma.org](http://www.policereformnowma.org)