



October 31, 2025

Partner Organization Statements on *Harris v. Lee* Amicus Brief

ACLU-TN and Community Organizations Urge Court to Block Governor's Unconstitutional National Guard Deployment in Memphis

On Thursday, October 30, ACLU-TN, along with Memphis-based community organizations, filed an amicus brief in *Harris v. Lee*. The amicus brief supports the seven elected officials challenging Governor Bill Lee's deployment of the Tennessee National Guard to Memphis. Community leaders across Memphis are united in their demand for accountability, transparency, and respect for constitutional limits. Below are statements from local organizations joining the ACLU-TN's amicus brief.

ACLU of Tennessee

Miriam Nemeth, Executive Director

"For-profit detention centers and militarized policing both thrive in darkness. Whether it's National Guard troops deployed as police officers in Memphis or ICE agents detaining our neighbors in Mason, we're witnessing a dangerous erosion of checks and balances. The threats are coordinated, so our response must be as well."

Media Inquiries: communications@aclu-tn.org

American Muslim Advisory Council (AMAC)

Sabina Mohyuddin, Executive Director

“Our Constitution is clear about where power lies: ‘We the People.’ The Tennessee Constitution has ensured that, setting the standard high for past deployments. Memphis Muslim, immigrant and black communities are not asking for surveillance and intimidation but investments and opportunities.”

Media Inquiries: pr@amactn.com

Memphis for All

Organization Statement

“True leadership protects democracy; it doesn’t deploy troops against it. What’s happening in Memphis isn’t about safety, it’s about control. We stand with the ACLU and Democracy Forward to affirm that our communities deserve care, not fear, and that no amount of force can silence a people determined to be free.”

Media Inquiries: Tikeila@memphisforall.com

Memphis Interfaith Coalition for Action and Hope (MICAHA)

Tyler Foster, Vice President

“Governor Bill Lee is once again putting politics over people by caving to pressure from the Trump administration. What Memphis needs isn’t more policing and surveillance—it’s real investments in quality education, good-paying jobs, affordable housing, and robust mental health services. That’s what actually keeps communities safe.”

Media Inquiries: Venita@micahmemphis.org

Stand For Children Tennessee

Cardell Orrin, Executive Director

“Stand for Children Tennessee joined this amicus brief because Memphis and Shelby County residents deserve transparency, accountability, and local control over how public safety decisions are made and carried out. Deploying the National Guard and federal agents without clear local consent undermines trust, weakens collaboration, and blurs lines of authority. Public safety must be rooted in community partnership and guided by those closest to the people it serves.

What is happening in Memphis reflects a larger threat to democracy across the country. When state and federal power override local authority, it endangers the principles of self-governance

and accountability that every community depends on. This lawsuit is a necessary step toward restoring that balance and ensuring that decisions about our city's safety remain accountable to Memphis and its residents.”

Media Inquiries: mgraham@stand.org

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)

Lisa Sherman Luna, Executive Director

“All Tennesseans deserve to feel safe in their communities, but this militarized show of state force in Memphis has led to fear, family separation, and arrests without due process, particularly in communities of color. We stand with other community organizations and leaders in their challenge to the unconstitutional deployment of National Guard troops into Memphis against the Tennessee Constitution, the will of local authorities, and the people of Memphis.”

Media Inquiries: media@tnimmigrant.org

Additional Partner Organizations:

Advocates for Immigrant Rights

The Equity Alliance (Media Inquiries: jason@theequityalliance.org)

The Free The 901 Campaign (Media Inquiries: info@freethe901.com)

Just City

OUTMemphis

Transformative Justice Initiative of the University of Memphis School of Law