



## New Plaintiffs Join ACLU Illegal Arrests Lawsuit, Call on City Police to Finally End Unconstitutional Practices

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**CONTACT:**  
Meredith Curtis, ACLU-MD  
410-889-8555 or  
media@aclu-md.org

BALTIMORE – Charging that Baltimore City police continue to arrest thousands of people without just cause each year, the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland today added new plaintiffs to its lawsuit against the Baltimore City Police Department – amending the case to challenge wrongful arrests that took place since the filing of the lawsuit in 2006. The legal filing includes an original plaintiff in the lawsuit who was wrongfully arrested for a second time, a young man who was illegally arrested twice in the same summer, and four plaintiffs who were wrongfully arrested while engaged in protected First Amendment activity.

In addition to many individual plaintiffs, ACLU represents both the Maryland State Conference of NAACP Branches and the Baltimore City Branch of the NAACP in the lawsuit.

“How many more innocent people have to be handcuffed, taken to Central Booking, strip searched, kept in crowded and filthy cells, and then released without being charged in order for justice and the rule of law to again have meaning for all Baltimoreans?” said David Rocah, Staff Attorney for the ACLU of Maryland.

Tim Johnson, a neurobiologist in town from Texas for a research convention, was arrested after stopping on the street to watch a woman being handcuffed. Armondo Horsey, an architect from Baltimore, was arrested with his friend Jonathan Lindsay after showing concern for what appeared to them to be an incident of police brutality. Raffick Scott and Kerrell Wright were arrested while handing out religious pamphlets in an entirely legal manner. (*See attached biographies for details about plaintiffs added to the lawsuit*).

From January through August of 2007 (the last date for which data is publicly available), approximately 21% of those persons arrested without a warrant by the Baltimore Police Department have been released without charge. “Despite a decline in the percentage of cases where the State’s Attorney declines prosecution, the still extraordinary number of persons released without charge, and the facts of our clients’ particular arrests, indicate a continuing problem,” said Rocah

“There is no justification for arresting a young man for tying his shoe in front a friend’s house in his own neighborhood, or for walking with his friends to a basketball game in the summer,” said Marvin “Doc” Cheatham, President of the Baltimore City Branch of the NAACP. “This practice by the Baltimore City Police Department does nothing but make it harder for our young men to make it in this city and harder for us to bring the community and police together.”

AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION OF  
MARYLAND FOUNDATION  
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD  
SUITE 350  
BALTIMORE, MD 21211  
T/410-889-8555  
F/410-366-7838  
WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS  
ELLIOTT ANDALMAN  
PRESIDENT

SUSAN GOERING  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

C. CHRISTOPHER BROWN  
GENERAL COUNSEL

In June 2006, the ACLU filed a class-action lawsuit, *NAACP v. BCPD*, challenging the wrongful arrest practices of the Baltimore police. The lawsuit targets both city and state officials for their roles in making illegal arrests and mistreating arrestees taken into custody at Central Booking.

Plaintiffs are represented by ACLU cooperating counsel Mitch Karlan, New York partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, along with Washington D.C. partner Wayne Schrader and D.C. associates Daniel Cantu, Bennett Borden, Jason Morrow, Hillary Gould, Dave Wharwood, Darcy Troutman, Lissa Percopo, Erik Zimmerman, and Joy Dowdle, and by ACLU of Maryland lawyers Deborah A. Jeon and David Rocah.

Go to ACLU-MD's website to see video of arrests, pictures of plaintiffs, and to learn more about the illegal arrests lawsuit: <http://www.aclu-md.org>

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