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Attorneys Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci to file federal civil rights lawsuit in police shooting death of Leonard Parker

April 16, 2021

Civil rights attorneys Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci today announced they are preparing to file a federal civil rights lawsuit in the Fifth Circuit for the February 1, 2020 shooting death of 53-year-old Leonard Parker, Jr. in Gulfport, Mississippi.

Mr. Parker, who was from Covington, Georgia, was shot and killed early that Saturday morning in a residential neighborhood. Police reports say Mr. Parker was unarmed and driving a car on the street when an officer fired shots at the car, striking and killing Mr. Parker. The officer involved was placed on non-enforcement duty after the incident but has never been identified to the public or the Parker family.

Earlier this month, a Grand Jury there decided not to indict the officer(s) involved, however at least one key witness – the passenger in the car driven by Mr. Parker – was not asked to testify before that Grand Jury.

“Black citizens like Leonard Parker, Jr. continue to be shot and killed by police, even when they are unarmed and have done nothing wrong,” said Crump. “Police were at that location for an unrelated concern and yet Mr. Parker ends up dead. Black lives continue to be undervalued by police in our country, and it must end. As a nation, we must be better; we demand better.”

“The lack of a bystander video to this tragedy is so unfortunate, as not only has it made it hard for many people to understand what happen and share this family’s outrage, but it has also allowed law enforcement here to try and bury this case from public view. Officials have not turned over key documents, body camera footage, or the name of any officer involved. But worst of all, they have not shown the Parker family the respect of even acknowledging the death. This is completely shameful, and we will ensure this family gets the justice they deserve,” said Romanucci.

“Leonard was a wonderful father, husband, brother and son, and we continue to grieve and struggle with his loss. He was full of life and should be alive and with us today. We need answers. We need accountability. We need justice,” said Catina Parker, widow of Leonard Parker, Jr.

About Ben Crump Law

Nationally renowned civil rights and personal injury attorney Ben Crump and his national network of specialized attorneys have spearheaded a legal movement to better protect the rights of marginalized citizens. He has led landscape-changing civil rights cases and represented clients in a wide range of areas including civil rights, personal injury, labor and employment, class actions, and more. Ben Crump Law is dedicated to holding the powerful accountable. For more, visit BenCrump.com or call (800) 935-8111.

About Romanucci & Blandin, LLC

Romanucci & Blandin is a Chicago-based national trial practice committed to fighting for victims of negligence, abuse and wrongful death arising from police misconduct, corporate negligence, civil rights actions, medical malpractice, mass torts and class actions. Founded in 1998, the firm is widely recognized for representing plaintiffs in numerous practice areas including: workers' compensation, pharmaceuticals, civil rights, police misconduct, excessive force, aviation, product liability and premises liability. For more information, please visit www.rblaw.net or call (312) 458-1000.