

MOTION

On January 8, 2022, Tioni Theus, a 16-year old Black girl and resident of the City of Los Angeles, was found dead on the southbound 110 Freeway on-ramp on Manchester Avenue, a victim of an apparent murder. According to reporting in the *Los Angeles Times*, nearly two weeks elapsed before requests for public assistance in finding Tioni's killer were made. To date, the murder of Tioni Theus remains unsolved and no substantive known progress has been made in the case.

The murder of Tioni Theus is a tragic loss, but it is not an isolated incident. Her murder is an unfortunate representation of the longstanding history of violence against Black women and girls in the United States that too often goes underreported, unsolved or overlooked.

In 2020, Black women and girls faced the highest murder rate of any ethnic group in the United States, an average of four murders per day, according to the FBI. Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey show that Black women are also twice as likely to be threatened by an offender armed with a handgun as their white counterparts. According to nationwide crime data from 1980 to 2008 analyzed by Scripps Howard News Service, the clearance rate for homicides involving white victims was 78 percent, compared to 67 percent for victims of color.

Black women and girls made up 34% of the 268,884 total girls and women missing in 2020, according to the National Crime Information Center, despite making up only 15% of the U.S. female population.

Meanwhile, national news coverage of missing and murdered women and girls remains disproportionate to the reality. A 2016 study published in the *Northwestern Law Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* revealed that while Black Americans make up more than a third of all missing persons reported to the FBI, they make up approximately one-fifth of the missing persons reported in the mainstream media. By comparison, the study showed that white missing persons received slightly more media coverage than their actual share of the total missing persons population.

While violent crime against any individual, regardless of race or gender, is a terrible tragedy, deep inequities exist in the violence and crime Black women and girls face, the ways in which those crimes are covered in the media, and in turn, the way in which society perceives and responds to the problem. Tioni Theus, and all Black women and girls who have been the victims of violent crime, deserve our attention, compassion, and the swift and urgent pursuit of justice.


I THEREFORE MOVE, that the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department, with the assistance of the LAPD, report back with an equity analysis on violence and crime facing Black women and girls in the City of Los Angeles, the rate at which homicides and violent crimes against them are




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solved, how missing persons cases involving Black women and girls are handled, and policy recommendations for providing equity and justice for these victims and their families.


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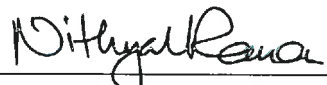

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