



HARVARD BLACK STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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**PRESS RELEASE
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BLACK HARVARD STUDENTS DEMAND ACTION FROM GOVERNOR PATRICK REGARDING VIOLENCE...

A group of black Harvard students will gather at a Roxbury crime scene to urge Governor Deval L. Patrick to do more on reducing urban violence in Boston and across the state. The college students are part of a growing statewide movement responding to the issue of violence in poor, predominantly black and brown neighborhoods.

“When Pop Warner football coaches are shot in broad daylight in front of their young athletes, it sends a clear message that we are descending into a state of anarchy not witnessed in the past,” said Sarah Lockridge-Steckel, president of the Harvard Black Student Association.

The Harvard students issued a letter to Patrick demanding he pay more attention to the street violence and pressed him for meaning policy solutions. “Governor Patrick must now produce verifiable programs and outcomes that help prevent violent crime and protect young citizens. And we, as Harvard students, are standing here in solidarity with the black high school students in Boston and the larger black community to build new movement for peace and social justice,” said Malcolm Rivers, a Harvard student and resident of Dorchester.

The Harvard students will be joined at a vigil tonight by Kim Odom, the mother of the 13-year-old youth recently murdered in Dorchester. The vigil will be held at 7pm at Malcolm X Park in Roxbury, the site of shooting of the Pop Warner football coach.

“The Governor must hear us when we say that the murder of young people must stop. We expect the governor to look out for all of the people,” said Marcus Garvey Peterson, 16, of Hyde Park and co-founder of Operation Greensboro, an initiative to mobilize students across the state against violence.

In a letter sent to Patrick, the Harvard students questioned Patrick’s leadership and challenged him to act. “In your list of priorities for the state of Massachusetts, where does the eradication of youth violence and black on black crime fall? Perhaps to you, the 52 homicides that have occurred in Boston this year are not as impressive a number as the billion dollars you plan to earmark for the development of the biotech industry in Massachusetts.”

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