

Ayanna Pressley calls on the Boston police union to apologize to Rachael Rollins

Pressley said the union's tactics were "predictable but deeply disappointing."



Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins and Rep. Ayanna Pressley during a rally Tuesday at the State House.
—John Tlumacki / The Boston Globe

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By [Nik DeCosta-Klipa](#), Boston.com Staff
June 4, 2020

Rep. Ayanna Pressley is backing up Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins in her [dispute this week](#) with the local Boston police union over [her response](#) to the recent anti-police brutality protests.

"The tactics of the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association are predictable but deeply disappointing," Pressley said in a statement Wednesday night, calling for an apology from the union for their "unfounded attacks" on the Democratic district attorney.

Rollins, who has [pushed for more racial equality in policing](#) as the Boston area's top prosecutor, faced criticism this week from leaders of the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association, after she [gave voice to the frustration in communities of color](#) over police violence during a press conference Monday, following peaceful protests Sunday in Boston that led to looting and clashes with law enforcement. Rollins called the looting and attempts to harm officers "unacceptable," but also called it "ironic" that people were being asked to be nonviolent by law enforcement groups that [disproportionately act violently](#) toward people of color.

In response, the BPPA [accused](#) Rollins of "slandering our officers as murderers," when she should have done more to highlight how they "responded to violent attacks against them with courage and restraint." Of the [53 people arrested following the protests Sunday](#), three were charged with assaulting an officer. At least 21 police vehicles were also damaged.

"It was utterly inappropriate for you to make a statement mocking violence," BPPA President Lawrence Calderone and Vice President Richard Withington [wrote in a public letter to Rollins](#), referring to her comments about the "irony" of the calls for nonviolence.

During the press conference, Rollins did commend Boston police leadership and said her "heart goes out" to the officers who were injured in the aftermath of the protests. Still, she added that people in Boston's disproportionately low-income

communities of color were “fed up” with interactions with many rank-and-file officers.

According to [a comprehensive 2014 report](#) by the ACLU, Black people in Boston were more likely than white people to be stopped by police, even when controlling for non-race factors, like local crime rates, prior arrest rates, and alleged gang affiliations.



Pressley, a fellow Boston Democrat, said Wednesday that Rollins has “earned the deep trust of families, advocates, and officers across Suffolk County” and has an “unmatched” command of “justice and accountability.” She also suggested the union’s response was dangerous.

“The BPPA’s unfounded attacks put the DA at risk, but will not derail for a moment her tireless and disciplined work to lead us towards a more just and humane legal system that centers the dignity and humanity of the people we have all sworn to serve and protect,” Pressley wrote.

“The Patrolmen’s Association should immediately issue an apology to our District Attorney,” the Massachusetts congresswoman continued. “In a time of national crisis, when Black men and women are disproportionately dying in police

custody, the BPPA should be at the table humbly working to chart a path forward, not tearing down a Black woman in leadership and putting her life at further risk.”

The local Boston chapter of the NAACP also [said Wednesday](#) that the police union’s response was “not what we need.”

During a press conference Tuesday [pressing for legislative action](#) to address police misconduct, Rollins [thanked](#) the “overwhelming majority of members of law enforcement that go to work every day and do a job that none of us would sign up for — even if it was three times the salary.” But she noted that, in every career field, there’s a certain percentage of people “who just show up and get a paycheck and don’t care about what they’re doing.” Rollins also noted that law enforcement is the only branch of government, “which all of our taxes pay for,” with the right to kill “without any oversight.”

“We’re not here because of the good and honorable and culturally competent and deescalation-able officers,” Rollins said. “We’re here for the other ones.”

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HD4USA ★ Leader · 3d



They wouldn't sign up to be cops because their stupid leaders don't support police, are unnecessarily putting them in danger, putting blame on police for horrible things they never did, & hammering the public with the lying message that police hate them

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folks just a thought. this is not meant to dismiss legitimate concerns- but when i turn on the TV in the morning....if there was a murder or a shooting it likely was in a black neighborhood. That makes me angry, because I understand the root causes of poverty that usually drive violence like that... but doesn't it explain why blacks are "disproportionately" arrested? The police are in the black neighborhoods due to the violent crime. They see other stuff and make arrests. yes some of them are racists buffoons and hassle people- but what i just stated explains the discrepancy more than anything else. If we are going to have an honest conversation in this country on race, both sides need to be honest. And woe to anyone who thinks the solution is not going after violent criminals. If you like that approach move to Honduras.

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Furious-2 ★ Leader · 3d

They shouldn't be ironic. The bpd should encourage violent protests. Why didn't we all see this earlier?

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whatever1999 ★ Leader · 3d

If Pressley truly can't understand why police have issues with Rollins than she needs to reconsider her day job

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OCeallaigh · 3d → whatever1999

You mean because she's a woman of color not putting up with cop shenanigans?

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Puravida21 ★ Influencer · 3d

defund the police. Put more liberals in charge. Divide the city by race and then watch the whole place burn. Two people determined to destroy this country.

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UB1912 ★ Leader · 3d

Presley is as delusional as Rollins is./

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summerpeoplesummernot ★ Contributor · 3d



been going on forever but yet they are just now raising their voices.. Ayanna, what have you ever done to help your people in their cause with police brutality?? exactly. You could have saved a life or 2 if you had.

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wdriii ★ Leader · 3d → summerpeoplesummernot



She voted herself a pay raise immediately after being sworn in to congress in January of 19.

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HD4USA ★ Leader · 3d · Edited



It's amazing 50 protesters a week ago politicians freaked out about Covid...Wall to wall media BSabout alleged typhoid Mary...
A week later mobs & mobs & CRICKETS... same politicians NO COVID LECTURE for thousands and thousands of complete violators (D)
DISTANCING IS SURRENDER... COMPLIANCE YOU HAVE ALREADY SURRENDERED YOUR FREEDOM... Those with the guts to face other human beings rule the street and hold all power.
(but they got nice couch potato stuff at home!!)
NO NEW CASES IN NY AFTER A WEEK OF MASSIVE HUGGING CROWDS...
OPEN FENWAY PARK.. 4TH OF JULY!!!! THIS IS AMERICA

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Sluggo5150 ★ Influencer · 3d



Anything that doesn't support their agenda is racist.

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wacky123 ★ Leader · 3d



They both look like they have not missed a meal in while. Must be nice to be employed.

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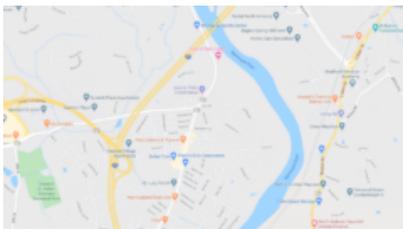
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FATAL CRASH

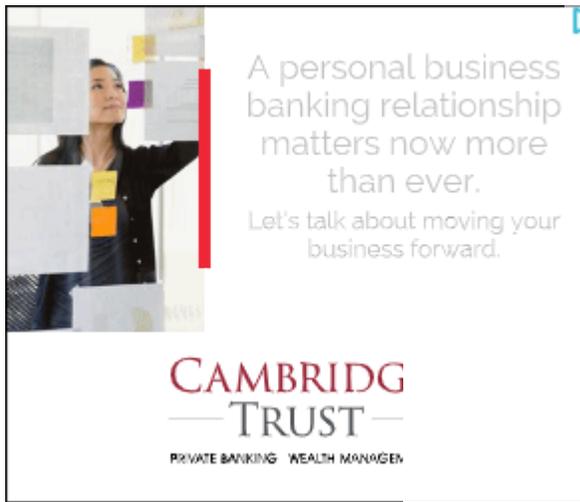
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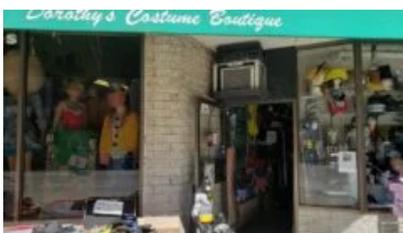
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