

From: [Maya Manus](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Cc: [Michelle Merriweather](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Youth Rights Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 8:31:36 AM
Attachments: [Support for Youth Rights Ordinances.pdf](#)

Good morning,

Attached is the written statement on behalf of Michelle Merriweather, President and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best,

Maya Manus

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To: King County Council, Law and Justice Committee
From: Michelle Merriweather, President & CEO
Re: Youth Rights Ordinances Statement of Support
Date: July 21, 2020

Black youth are overrepresented in all aspects of the criminal justice system and as such, need support at every level. That is why the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle is supporting the proposed Youth Rights Ordinances introduced in the Seattle City and King County council. The proposed ordinances would add protections for Black youth by connecting them to public defenders before they are asked to waive the right to remain silent, consent to a search, or answer any questions from law enforcement.

Youth do not understand their rights, let alone know how to assert them, and because of this, they can be easily coerced by law enforcement. Black youth are especially susceptible, as they have a distinct fear and distrust of the police, making it even more unlikely that they will feel safe enough to assert their rights. It is imperative that safeguards are put into place when it comes to youth interactions with law enforcement. Youth need a lawyer on their side to educate them on their rights and consequences before they make decisions that will impact the trajectory of their lives.

Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle would like to honor MiChance Dunlap-Gittens, a young person who dreamed of one day going to law school and championing the rights of youth. Please support the Youth Rights Ordinances.