



**Prepared Remarks of Andrea Young, Executive Director
of the ACLU of Georgia, in support of abolishing cash bail
Delivered Before the Atlanta City Council
Tuesday, February 6, 2018**

Madam Mayor, President Moore, Members of the city council, and ladies and gentlemen of the general public.

My name is Andrea Young, and I am the executive director of the ACLU of Georgia. The ACLU of Georgia supports legislation to end the use of cash bail.

In his famous “letter from the Birmingham Jail” Dr. King reminds us, “there are two types of laws: there are just laws, and there are unjust laws.”

In our civil rights era, city leaders like Jesse Hill and Herman Russell used their homes as collateral to make bail for the student protesters who were fighting to dismantle Jim Crow segregation.

Students were organized by student leaders such as Julian Bond, Lonnie King, Carolyn Long Banks – the first black woman to serve on this Council.

Why — more than 50 years later — why do we still maintain that unjust system of bail?

Laws that result in punishment for people who have not been found guilty of a crime are **unjust**.

Our current bail system perpetuates racial injustice. In Atlanta, the median income for black households is around \$25,000, while the median white household income is around \$80,000.

Laws that allow the business owner to go free, but require the janitor to sit in jail are **unjust**.

These laws create one system of justice for the affluent and another for working people and the poor. These laws are **unjust**.

Ending cash bail is an important first step. Atlanta must lead.

Our Atlanta city fathers and mothers dismantled the old Jim Crow.

We can, and we must unravel all of the manifestations of the New Jim Crow.

Thank you.



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