



PRESS RELEASE

DC Police Union Statement on Video of Arrest of Armed Suspect

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Sunday, August 8, a video surfaced online showing MPD officers making an arrest of an armed suspect. While some have rushed to judgement concerning the use of force used by the officers, one thing is certain, the use of force of any kind is not easy to watch.

It is important for people to know that the suspect in the video was in possession of a fully loaded .45 caliber "ghost gun" which was ultimately recovered from the suspect's front waistband. This recovery can be seen in the video at the 4:13 mark, when officers remove the gun from his pants. Prior to taking possession of the weapon, the gun was unsecured and a danger to the police officers, the suspects and anyone nearby. A still image of the gun recovery is included in this press release.

The officers in the video were deployed to the neighborhood in which the arrest took place specifically with orders to "get guns off the street" in reference to recently launched gun violence prevention programs. Additionally, they were in this location because it has experienced a recent, dramatic increase in violent crime.

Prior to the arrest, the officers observed an obvious narcotics transaction and immediately identified a suspect who was in possession of a handgun. With specific orders to target illegal guns and gun crimes, the officers conducted a stop of the suspect with reasonable suspicion that he was involved in selling drugs and also in possession of a firearm.

When the suspect was stopped, he began to resist. The officers physically determined that there was a weapon in his waistband and that the suspect was making efforts to retrieve it. In this case, these officers used a minimal amount of force to subdue a violent suspect in possession of an illegal firearm. The suspect made every indication that he was not afraid or reluctant to use the weapon. The suspect was arrested and charged with Carrying an Illegal Firearm, a fully loaded .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol. Four officers were injured in this incident.

Just this past week several officers nationwide have been killed by firearms in the line of duty. It is well known by police officers everywhere that criminals are not afraid to harm police. The MPD officers in the video were doing everything within their legal authority to protect themselves, and the communities they patrol, from an armed, and potentially, violent offender.

This incident will be investigated by the US Attorney's Office, the MPD Internal Affairs Division, and likely the Office of Police Complaints. The Union is in full cooperation with all aspects of those investigations. We are confident that when the facts come to light, the actions taken by the officers will be understood and deemed justifiable. In addition to this review, the Union itself will conduct an internal review to determine if proper procedure was followed.

MPD officers know that in the current political environment every action they take will be scrutinized. Police officers make split second decisions about their safety and the safety of those around them. Scrutiny, however, is performed with a microscope as though the circumstances took place in a laboratory. That is not the case. It bears repeating that the suspect had access to a loaded .45 caliber weapon, was resisting arrest and as such a danger to every person in range of a bullet.

We urge everyone to reserve judgment pending the outcome of the respective independent investigations.



.45 Caliber, fully loaded, semi-auto pistol