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**National Association of Social Workers Statement on Baton Rouge Police Shootings**  
*NASW offers condolences to families, urges reforms to address gun violence, policing*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** -- The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) offers its condolences to the family and colleagues of three slain Baton Rouge law enforcement officers and urges legislators, the police and the public peacefully come together to address gun violence, enact sensible gun laws, and help police improve relations with the communities they serve.

Baton Rouge law enforcement officers Montrell Jackson, Brad Garafola and Matthew Gerald on Sunday were killed by a gunman who was a former Marine and was apparently led by the distorted rationalization that violence can rectify a perceived social wrong.

Their deaths followed more than a week of violence and public unrest, including the police shootings of two African American men in Baton Rouge and Minnesota and the killing of five police officers in Dallas.

These tragic incidents have again focused attention on sensible gun laws, policing, and race relations in the United States. NASW hopes these issues will be addressed peacefully. Violence against law enforcement is counterproductive and divisive and will not address the root causes of these social problems.

NASW and members of the social work profession have long been committed to addressing social problems using peaceful means. NASW and social workers also encourage respect for social and cultural diversity in the United States and abroad.

In the days, weeks and months ahead NASW will continue working with partner organizations and policymakers to push for reforms, including:



- A ban on assault weapons that have been typically used in mass shootings and more recently to kill police in Dallas and Baton Rouge.
- Pressing Congress to lift the ban that prevents the Centers for Disease Control from conducting comprehensive research on the causes and prevention of gun violence in the United States.
- A new agency within the U.S. Department of Justice to enact national standards on the use of lethal police force.
- Training to help end police violence and racial profiling.
- Mandatory use of body cameras by police.
- The demilitarization of police forces.

Despite recent tragedies our nation remains resilient and resourceful. Although progress may seem slow, NASW is confident our culturally rich and diverse and rich nation will come together to lessen occurrences of such senseless acts of violence.

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*[The National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\)](#), in Washington, DC, is the largest membership organization of professional social workers with 130,000 members. It promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers. NASW also seeks to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its advocacy.*