



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rep. Wilson and U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men & Boys to Honor Parents Carrying Forward the Legacies of Black Children Lost to Violence

During her final Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference, Wilson will lead “Our Young Black Boys Are Being Murdered and Nobody Seems to Care” and honor families who transformed their pain into purpose

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This week, Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson (FL-24), chair of the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, will center the voices, courage and advocacy of bereaved parents during the 55th Annual Legislative Conference of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.

The centerpiece of Congresswoman Wilson’s final Annual Legislative Conference as a member of Congress will be the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Braintrust, “Our Young Black Boys Are Being Murdered and Nobody Seems to Care,” on Friday, September 18.

The braintrust will honor the lives and legacies of King Carter, Jordan Davis, Trayvon Martin and Nolan Wells while paying special tribute to the parents who turned unimaginable loss into a lifelong fight for truth, justice and change.

Six-year-old King Carter was killed by gunfire near his Miami-Dade home in 2016. His parents, Monica Smith and Santonio Carter, transformed their heartbreak into advocacy aimed at ending gun violence and protecting other children from the tragedy that took their son.

Seventeen-year-old Jordan Davis was shot and killed at a Jacksonville gas station in 2012 following a confrontation over loud music. His mother, Congresswoman Lucy McBath (GA-06), carried Jordan’s memory from advocacy into public office, becoming a leading national voice for gun violence prevention.

Seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin was walking back from a convenience store in Sanford, Florida, when he was followed and fatally shot in 2012. His death awakened the conscience of the nation and helped ignite a new era of civil rights activism. His mother,

Sybrina Fulton, has dedicated her life to preserving Trayvon's legacy and fighting for safer communities, justice and meaningful change.

Eighteen-year-old Nolan Wells disappeared during a Fourth of July boating trip to Horn Island, Mississippi, and was found dead two days later. With critical questions surrounding the circumstances of his death still unanswered, his parents, Christine Wells Wonsley and Elmore Wonsley, continue to demand a complete, transparent and accountable investigation into what happened to their son.

The discussion will be co-moderated by civil rights attorney Ben Crump and Congresswoman McBath, who will also share Jordan's story and her journey from a grieving mother to a national leader in the fight to protect families from gun violence.

Panelists will include Congresswoman Wilson; Congressman Hank Johnson (GA-04); Congressman Christian Menefee (TX-18); STARZ actor Nicco Annan; Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin; Christine Wells Wonsley and Elmore Wonsley, mother and father of Nolan Wells; and Monica Smith and Santonio Carter, mother and father of King Carter.

Together, the moderators, panelists and parents will share their experiences, honor their children's lives and confront a nation that has too often failed to protect Black children or deliver justice to their families.

"These parents have endured the pain no mother or father should ever have to bear, yet they refused to allow their children's stories to end with their deaths," **said Congresswoman Wilson.** "They turned grief into action, heartbreak into advocacy and their children's names into movements for justice. We honor King, Jordan, Trayvon and Nolan by honoring the parents who carry their legacies forward and by continuing their fight to protect every Black child in America."

The Commission will also hold its Official Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony: Honoring the Martyrs Who Shaped Black History, featuring a special tribute to the parents who continue to carry their children's legacies forward.

The Commission will honor Monica Smith and Santonio Carter, parents of King Carter; Congresswoman Lucy McBath, mother of Jordan Davis; Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin; and Christine Wells Wonsley and Elmore Wonsley, parents of Nolan Wells.

The ceremony will recognize these parents not simply as survivors of tragedy, but as leaders whose relentless pursuit of truth, justice and accountability has changed communities, influenced public policy and ensured that their children's names will never be forgotten.

“Behind every young Black life lost is a family left carrying unimaginable grief and a future forever rewritten,” **said the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys.** “Yet these parents have turned their pain into purpose, their heartbreak into action and their children's names into a national demand for justice. The Commission stands with them to ensure their voices are heard, their children's legacies endure and their courage drives the change necessary to protect Black men and boys across America.”

Congresswoman Wilson has spent her career fighting for Black children and standing beside families whose lives have been forever changed by violence. Her work led to the establishment of the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, a bipartisan federal commission charged with examining the conditions affecting Black men and boys and advancing solutions in education, health care, employment, housing, criminal justice and public safety.

The Commission's work continues the mission Congresswoman Wilson began more than three decades ago through the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project: protecting Black boys, interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline and surrounding young men with the mentorship, opportunities and support they need to succeed.

“For years, these parents cried out for justice while too many people looked away,” **said Congresswoman Wilson.** “The Commission exists because America must pay attention to what is happening to Black men and boys. We will say their names. We will listen to their families. We will tell their stories. Most importantly, we will continue fighting for a country where no parent has to bury a child because of racism, violence or a system that failed to value his life.”

Wilson Scholars and Role Models representing Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Broward County Public Schools, Duval County Public Schools and the Los Angeles Unified School District will also travel to Washington to participate in the conference. The students will attend the Commission's braintrust, serve as ambassadors and experience the institutions and history their predecessors helped shape.

Their presence will create a powerful connection between the children whose lives were taken, the parents protecting their legacies and the young men Congresswoman Wilson has dedicated her life to protecting.

The week will also include “From the Classroom to Congress: Celebrating Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson,” recognizing her 35 years of public service as an educator, school board member, state legislator and member of Congress.

KEY EVENTS

From the Classroom to Congress: Celebrating Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson

Thursday, September 17, 2026

7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The Anthem Room

Marriott Marquis Washington, D.C.

U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Braintrust

“Our Young Black Boys Are Being Murdered and Nobody Seems to Care”

Co-Moderators:

Congresswoman Lucy McBath (GA-06)

Civil Rights Attorney Ben Crump

Panelists and Featured Participants:

Congresswoman Frederica S. Wilson (FL-24)

Congressman Hank Johnson (GA-04)

Congressman Christian Menefee (TX-18)

Nicco Annan, STARZ Actor

Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin

Christine Wells Wonsley and Elmore Wonsley, mother and father of Nolan Wells

Monica Smith and Santonio Carter, mother and father of King Carter

Friday, September 18, 2026

4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Ballroom C

Walter E. Washington Convention Center

Washington, D.C.

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Official Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys

Honoring the Martyrs Who Shaped Black History

A Tribute to the Parents Who Carry Their Legacies Forward

Honoring:

Monica Smith and Santonio Carter, parents of King Carter

Congresswoman Lucy McBath, mother of Jordan Davis

Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin

Christine Wells Wonsley and Elmore Wonsley, parents of Nolan Wells

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About the U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys

The U.S. Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys is a bipartisan federal commission that examines the social disparities affecting Black men and boys and recommends policies to improve the conditions they face. Its work addresses education, employment, health care, housing, criminal justice, violence and other systemic challenges.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kailyn McBride, (202) 225-4506,
kailyn@mail.house.gov.