

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**August 13, 2016**

**Black Lives Matter Statement in Response to "Bloomington Police Lives Matter/  
Blue Lives Matter" Rally**

"Over the course of the past 24 hours, we have learned that the "pro-police" rally scheduled for Monday at 5:30pm at Bloomington City Hall is being organized and supported by local confederate-flag-toting white supremacists.

We are asking all of our supporters to stay away from the "Bloomington police lives matter/blue lives matter rally", as to not provide an audience for this hateful group. If our supporters wish to show support to their local police department, we are encouraging them to find another way to do so.

We understand that there is also a counter-protest planned in response to the "Bloomington Police Lives Matter" rally.

Black Lives Matter BloNo will not participate in either protest in any official capacity.

We have reached out to the Bloomington Police Department, and asked them to boycott and publicly denounce this event organized in their name. Our city should never provide a platform for known racists and certainly should not allow it to happen in the name of police. Ever. But especially not in light of the events in Charlottesville this weekend. You can read our message to BPD

here: <https://docs.google.com/.../1yuWYwv4tT5882T4ESv3WhkfBp0.../edit...>

We are encouraging our supporters to call (309-434-2355) or email ([police@cityblm.org](mailto:police@cityblm.org)) the Bloomington Police Department and join us in asking that they boycott and publicly denounce the event scheduled for tomorrow.

In solidarity,

Black Lives Matter BloNo"

**Black Lives Matter Implores Bloomington Police Department to Boycott and  
Denounce "Police Lives Matter" Rally**

Chief Brendan Heffner  
Bloomington Police Department  
305 S. East St.  
Bloomington, IL 61701

8/13/2017

Chief Heffner,

In the wake of the horrific and murderous acts of violence inflicted by white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia, we implore you to denounce and discourage the upcoming "Bloomington Police Lives Matter/Blue Lives Matter" rally that is

scheduled for Monday, 8/14, at 5:30pm. The chief organizer of this event is an outspoken racist who has a history of pulling together small groups to publicly display the Confederate battle flag, as well as signs with xenophobic and intolerant messaging (see attached photos).

While we understand that Monday's rally is not being organized by the Bloomington Police Department, and therefore cannot be called off by you or any other city official, this group has publically called on you and your officers to attend, and is holding this event in the name of your department and your officers.

We are concerned that this action will embolden those who seek to spread hatred within our community, and will publicly align their worldview with our local police force. Additionally, we are concerned that members of our community, who wish to show their support for BPD, will find themselves in the midsts of known white supremacists who are exploiting a pro-police position to build their ranks.

Because of the escalated tensions felt across the nation in the aftermath of the events in Charlottesville, and for the safety and wellbeing of our community, Black Lives Matter Bloomington-Normal is instructing its supporters to keep away from Monday's event.

We feel that it is your responsibility as the chief representative of your department, and as a public servant, to make it clear that the worldview of those organizing this event is not the worldview of the Bloomington Police Department by denouncing this event, and by instructing your officers to withhold their participation in this event.

Sincerely,

Black Lives Matter Bloomington-Normal