

Racial Justice News Items – June 2021

[Cori Bush proposal would put \\$10 billion behind social work, public health alternatives to policing](#)

[St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#)

U.S. Rep. Cori Bush on Monday introduced sweeping legislation to overhaul public safety by **spending \$10 billion to grow emergency response programs led by health officials, social workers and community groups, providing alternatives to police and prisons.** Bush's "People's Response Act" would establish a new federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services tasked with treating crimes such as gun violence and drug abuse as public health concerns. The goal, according to the bill, is to address "root causes of those issues rather than imposing criminal punishment."

Algeria Wilson is Director of Public Policy for NASW-MI:

[Relying on embedded social workers for police crisis response is not enough](#)

[Lansing State Journal](#)

While social workers are the largest group of behavioral health providers in the United States, they are not the end-all-be-all solution in crisis response. Crisis response and crisis stabilization require an interdisciplinary approach. A response that encompasses all mental health professionals involved and various other professions; including nurses, doctors, peer recovery specialists, and law enforcement when needed.

[Proposed budget funds behavioral health unit for Overland Park police](#)

[KMBC](#)

The unit would also double the department's mental health co-responders to six. "**The partnership between social workers and law enforcement is really powerful,**" Albers said. "The fact that we're going to bring more co-responders on board, it will save lives." Mental health calls are one of the most common that come to police.

Jennifer Wells is President of NASW-WV:

[Manchin's Stance on Voting Bill Called Betrayal to WV Black Voters](#)

[Public News Service](#)

Black West Virginians are voicing disappointment and anger over Sen. Joe Manchin's - D-W.Va. - [staunch opposition](#) to the For the People Act, a bill that would overhaul voting procedures nationwide. [The legislation](#) would expand voting access, restore portions of the Voting Rights Act, and boost transparency for political donations. Manchin is the only Senate Democrat who hasn't co-sponsored the bill. Cabell County resident Jennifer Wells, senior organizer with [Community Change Action](#), said Manchin's decision feels like a slap in the face, and said the Black vote pushed Manchin into office in 2018.