



The Trans* Community DEMANDS an Atlanta where everyone is safe and free to be themselves.

A little after midnight on Tuesday, May 20th, 2014, 3 Black trans* women were harassed and then viciously assaulted by two men while heading home on the MARTA (Atlanta's public transit). The harassment began at the 5 Points station and then turned violent between the West End and Oakland City Stations. The incident was caught on videotape and shows the women being taunted, yelled at, and then kicked and punched. One of the women is stripped completely naked while a man pins her down and hits her. It is a horrifying display of trans*phobia and violence. It was an act meant to physically hurt as well as demean and humiliate these women simply because they are trans*.

Nearly as distressing as the attack itself are the people standing around, cameras in hand, some laughing, some egging the attackers on. Not one of them intervenes or tells them to stop. Not one of them, it would appear, called 911 or has come forward to make a statement about the violence they witnessed. Not one of them offered the women a ride to the hospital or home or asked them if they needed anything or were alright. And, in fact, after it was over, someone who had videotaped it posted it on the internet with a catchy title so that millions of people could watch as entertainment...and the humiliation could be continued.

Janell Crosby, one of the survivors of the attack, met with Solutions Not Punishment Coalition (SNaP Co) and had this question to pose to all the riders who stood idly by: "What if this were your daughter? Your wife? Your mother? What would you do? Would you still have just stood there and watched it happen? Would you have laughed or run home to put it up on the internet? Why am I any less human, any less worthy of helping?"

Crosby also told SNaP Co that, despite MARTA's statement to WSB-TV that the first they heard of the attack was when the TV station contacted them, there were actually 5 MARTA officers who approached them as soon as the train pulled into the station – but these officers, it seems, took no action. They neither pursued the men who did the attacking, nor did they help the women who had been attacked. Ms. Crosby plainly states, "there was no pen, no paper, no statement taken of any kind." The three women were basically escorted from the station, treated as if *they* were the problem, and allowed to wait on the street corner to board a bus to get home.

Ms. Crosby is **requesting an apology** from the MARTA police for their handling (or lack thereof) of the situation. "I see MARTA cops all the time, but they spend more time arresting people for jumping the turnstiles and other petty things than keeping anyone in the LGBT community safe. I would like an apology for their treatment of me – they are supposed to serve and protect and they didn't do that – and they didn't do that because I am a Black trans* woman."

The survivors of the attacks did not receive any support. MARTA police did not take a statement nor did they seek medical attention on the women's behalf. How could it be that these actions to

support survivors were not even contemplated by MARTA police or those present on that train? How is it that these three survivors received none of that and are leaving Atlanta because they feel unsafe in this city that calls itself a mecca for the LGBT community?

Atlanta has a long way to go. **The MARTA police and the City of Atlanta need to make immediate statements in support of these survivors** and denouncing the actions of the MARTA police, the men who committed the violent acts, and the riders who stood by and let it happen. **MARTA and the city should embark on a public education campaign** to educate all riders that discrimination and harassment based on a person's identity will *not* be tolerated. They need to **train their officers** to better protect and respect LGBT people. They need to say loudly and clearly that Black and Trans* Lives Matter.

To our communities, **we challenge every single one of us to do better about stepping up and speaking out to stop an attack** when we see one happening -- rather than standing back and recording it. In communities of color, we know that the police are not well equipped to deal with violence as it's happening. Police sometimes, in fact, escalate it, or arrive long after the fact and then arrest everyone they can find (oftentimes including the victims who were simply defending themselves!) So we, as a community, must take better care of our brothers and sisters. **We encourage anyone who was on that train to come forward, apologize to the survivors and join with us to eliminate violence and transphobia in this city.**

As a diverse Coalition led by trans* people of color, we do not believe that our current criminal justice system is an effective mechanism of accountability, and we are not calling for lengthy sentences for the men that committed these acts. We don't measure the value of our lives by how much life is taken from someone else and we don't believe that long sentences in brutal, inhumane prisons will teach these men a lesson or bridge the gap between communities. **We are asking that the community bring these men forward and that a process of transformative justice be pursued. We would demand these men attend a Men Stopping Violence course, are made to do community service in support of an LGBT community organization, and be confronted directly by the women they harmed and the larger community and made to hear the impact they have had.**

But most importantly, **we call on the institutions who are supposed to protect and serve all of us to take this as a call to action and transform the way they do business.** The City of Atlanta should be deeply disturbed by the acts of harassment and violence endured by trans* women both at the hands of the Atlanta Police Department in Midtown and other neighborhoods that have recently been brought to light and by the general public on trains, buses, and on the streets. Our lives matter, trans* lives matter and we will no longer be silent or swept aside. **Enough is Enough!**



OUR CALL TO ACTION!

The City of Atlanta has a problem....and it's not us!

We demand that Mayor Reed address this incident and publicly commit to making this a city that protects and respects trans* and gender non conforming people wherever we may walk, ride, or drive in our city!

Contact Mayor Reed at mayorreed@atlantaga.gov or by phone at (404) 330-6100 and let him know that he must address the violent attacks on trans* women and lead the City to end anti-trans* violence! Trans* and gender non conforming people deserve to be safe wherever we may walk, ride or drive in our city!

Tweet @KasimReed

Sample Tweets:

@KasimReed #ATL and @MARTAServices has a problem #protecting and supporting #trans* people. We deserve better!#dignity #apologize and lead!

@KasimReed Is #ATL truly a city too busy to hate? Protect #girlslikeus whether on #MARTA, walking or driving in our city. #translivesmatter

@MartaService #Trans people are not the problem but being safe on MARTA is! #apologize and train your staff that #translivesmatter #dignity

Comment on his Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/KasimReed>

ABOUT SOLUTIONS NOT PUNISHMENT [SNaP CO]

Solutions Not Punishment is a broad based coalition with close to a hundred organizational and individual members. The Coalition is anchored by the Racial Justice Action Center, La Gender and (Trans)forming and works to build the power of people targeted and profiled by the Atlanta Police Department – especially Trans* and gender non conforming people of color, current and former street level sex workers, and formerly incarcerated people. SNaP Co works to transform the city into a vibrant, inclusive Atlanta that ensures the safety of, and holistically meets the needs of all the city's stakeholders and residents.

JOIN US FOR OUR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING which will be focused on this incident and what should be done about it: **Tuesday, June 3rd at 5:30 at the Philip Rush Center Annex** (behind the main building) 1530 DeKalb Ave in Atlanta (near Candler Park MARTA station) Have you been harassed or targeted by police or the public as a trans* or gender non-conforming person? Come out and tell your story and be part of making CHANGE so that no one else has to go through it!

For more information on Solutions Not Punishment Coalition please contact Everette Thompson at (404) 514-9215, Thompson@rjactioncenter.org and/or Xochitl Bervera (404)861-0756, xochitl@rjactioncenter.org. Follow us on twitter @RJActionCenter and join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/snapco/>