

LAW & JUSTICE

Excessive Force Appeal Filed

Albina Ministerial Alliance says lawsuit leaves out issues of race

BY CARI HACHMANN

The Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform has filed a motion to intervene the U.S. Department of Justice's lawsuit against the city for the Portland Police Bureau's pattern and practice of excessive force.

Filed on Tuesday, Jan. 8, the complaint argues that the agreement between the city and the DOJ "fails to address the concerns raised by the AMA coalition regarding community involvement and officer use of force, among other issues."

Since its inception in 2003, the AMA's justice and reform coalition has been at the forefront of public advocacy for police reform, oversight and accountability.

The group has offered multiple reviews and recommendations to the city and the DOJ pointing to the police bureau's excessive use of force against people of color and mentally ill individuals.

An analysis provided by the AMA group, found that 30 percent of the 61 people shot or killed were people of color, in a city that is

almost 79 percent white. Of those 61 people shot or killed, 23 percent were African American, compared to 6.4 percent of the city population, and 36 percent were unarmed.

The complaint argues that despite both AMA and Mayor Sam Adams' request that the DOJ look at racially biased policing in their investigation, the DOJ's failed to do so, limiting the lawsuit and agreement to police issues related to the mentally ill.

The AMA coalition also states that they, among other community groups "were not privy to the negotiations between the DOJ and the city that led to the draft agreement."

"One of the AMA's coalitions repeated concerns was that the DOJ and the City Council for the most part ignored its recommendations for unexplained reasons," said the complaint.

The agreement also fails to address concerns raised by the AMA coalition regarding community involvement and officer use of force, among other issues, the court motion says.

*Cowardice asks the question-is it safe?
Expediency asks the question-is it politic?
Vanity asks the question-is it popular?
But conscience asks the question- is it right?*

-- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



GREGORY P. OLIVEROS

"When evil men shout ugly words of hatred, good men must commit themselves to the glories of love. Where evil men would seek to perpetuate an unjust status quo, good men must seek to bring into being a real order of justice."

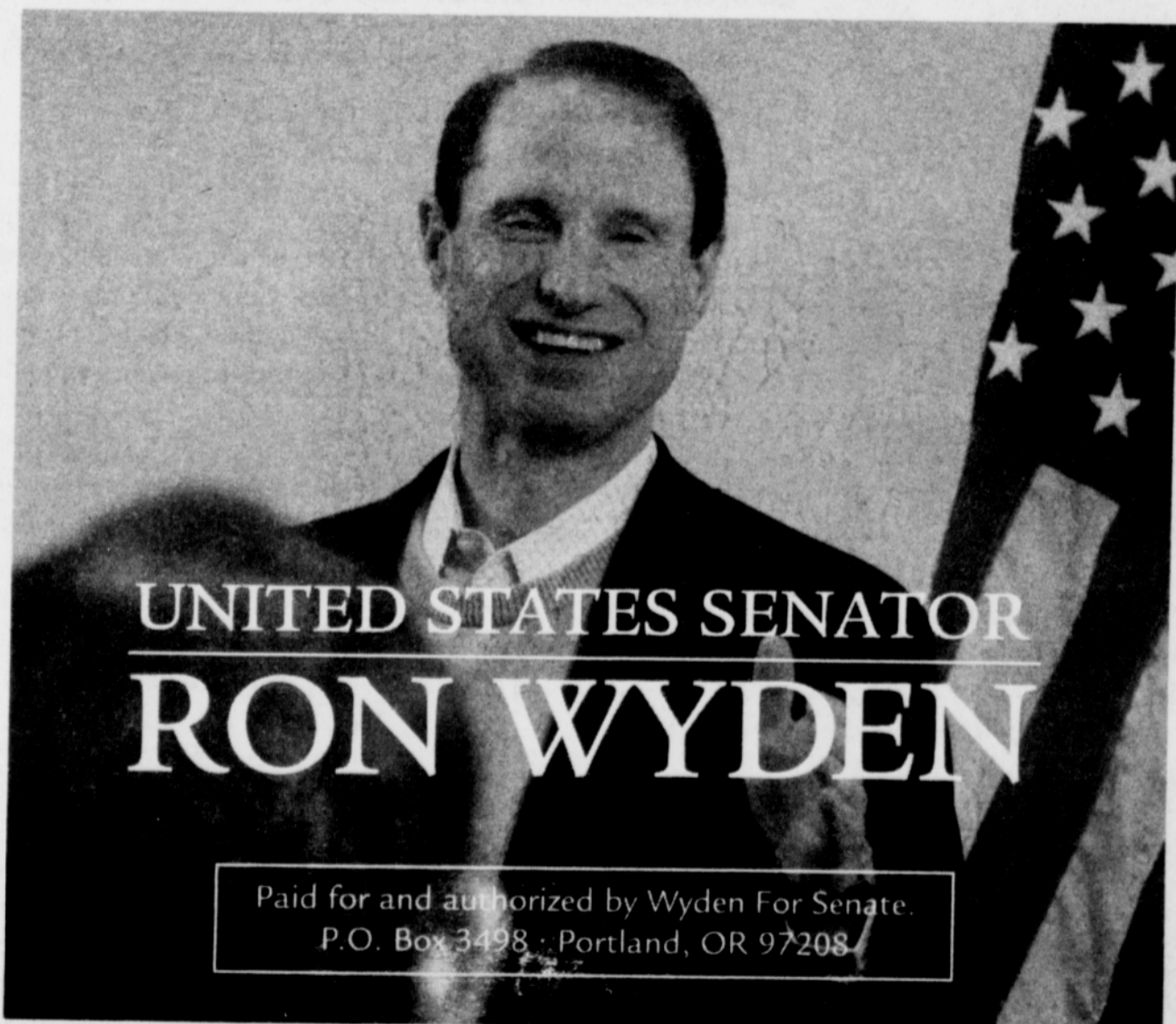
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

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'The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.'

-- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



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