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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Through its Pro Bono Attorney Referral Service and Thurgood Marshall School of Law Bail Fund, TSU Thurgood Marshall School of Law takes an aggressive approach in assisting protesters in Harris County seeking to expunge arrests

(Tuesday, July 7, 2020) – With nearly 800 protest-related criminal cases dismissed by the Harris County District Attorney’s Office as non-violent misdemeanor offenses, arrested protesters are left with criminal records jeopardizing future educational, employment, insurance, and housing opportunities. Amid agreed upon expunctions and a special interest in the critical need for arrested protesters to be linked to legal representation to clear their records, **Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) is lauded for its newly developed “Pro Bono Attorney Referral (“PBAR”) Service.**

Created in response to community protests stemming from the recent death of George Floyd and operated through the TMSL Legal Clinic, PBAR Service refers qualified attorneys to protesters arrested and prosecuted for the exercise of their First Amendment rights. To assist protesters who do not qualify for waiver of court filing fees, protesters can apply for financial assistance to support payment of fees (amount not to exceed \$150.00) through the **Thurgood Marshall School of Law Bail Fund.**

The TMSL Legal Clinic is no stranger to prioritizing responsiveness to community needs. As noted by TMSL Legal Clinic Director Thelma Harmon, “The TMSL Legal Clinic’s long-standing goal has been to provide legal representation and defend the marginalized of society, increasing access to justice for low-income individuals who cannot afford to hire an attorney. Since inception, our referral rate has remained at 100% for individuals who have contacted the Legal Clinic requesting a referral. Our PBAR Service will refer pro bono attorneys to protesters in need of having arrests expunged from their records. Our entire clinical staff is honored to offer this service and grateful to all those involved in this process to ensure access to justice is a reality for those in need of legal representation.”

To request an attorney referral through the TMSL PBAR Service:

- Contact the TMSL Legal Clinic, Monday-Friday, anytime, at (713) 313-1075 (leave a message)
- Requesting individual’s name and contact information will be emailed to referral attorney
- Requesting individual will be emailed the name and phone number of the referral attorney, with instructions to contact the referral attorney within ten (10) days of the referral to make an appointment

For additional information or questions, contact TMSL Clinic Director Thelma Harmon at (713) 313-7275.