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# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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## FEDS SHOULD INVESTIGATE JEFFERSON PARISH BEATING, BLACK LEGISLATORS SAY

The state Attorney General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation should launch an investigation into the July 22 beating of Troy Lawrence Jr. after a traffic stop in Elmwood.

Lawrence said he was handcuffed and beaten by as many as 10 deputy sheriffs in Jefferson Parish. The 16-year old boy, who is less than 5 ½ feet tall, was apparently being punished for maneuvering his handcuff wrists from his back to his lap while seated in a patrol car. The arresting deputy then removed Lawrence from the vehicle and threw him to the ground. He struck Lawrence so hard that he broke his own hand.

"Sheriff Harry Lee promised a full investigation but that's not good enough," said Rep. Juan LaFonta, chairman of the Legislative Black Caucus. "An accusation of this magnitude demands an outside investigation by higher authorities. The police should not police themselves when civil rights violations are involved."

LaFonta said the JPSO has a history of excessive force.

"A simple Google search will show you that," LaFonta said. "That doesn't even require a formal inquiry."

Now, more than one month after Lawrence was beaten, the Sheriff's Office has releases no new details and has disclosed no disciplinary actions taken against the deputies who clearly battered the young man.

"If Mr. Lawrence committed a traffic violations the deputy was well within his rights and responsibilities to execute a traffic stop and follow protocols," said LaFonta, an attorney. "But even if Mr. Lawrence did resist-which is questionable-it would not take 10 deputies to subdue an unarmed 5-foot-5-inch teenager who only weights 110 pounds."