



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE: Fort Erie Black Woman Under Anonymous Threat of House Burning Calls for Show of Support from Niagara Residents

FORT ERIE, ON – Natalee Cole, a Black resident of Fort Erie, has been receiving anonymous threatening letters complaining about her music which have escalated to a terrorist threat, “your neighbours and I will burn your house down with you inside.” Ms. Cole and her 7-year old daughter are traumatized by the threats and are calling on Niagara residents to show their support by gathering at her house, 58 Douglas St., Fort Erie, on Saturday, July 31, at 1 p.m. Neither bylaw enforcement nor the police have ever needed to ask Ms. Cole to turn down her music and the Niagara Regional Police is investigating the threats as serious under incident# 21-78814.

Ms. Cole and her daughter moved to Fort Erie two years ago and are Black, one of the only two BIPOC households in the neighborhood. Other neighbors play music at a comparable volume but only Ms. Cole has received threatening letters. She has received several anonymous letters as have Fort Erie City Hall and the Niagara Regional Police, who saw no cause to take action against Ms. Cole.

Ms. Cole says “the fact that I am receiving death threats over playing music is outrageous, what has this world come to? The residents of Niagara need to wake up and unite against racist bullying and intimidation. We need to join hands and hearts and fight hate so our communities can heal and go forward for a brighter future. No 7-year old child should be living in fear of death and homelessness.”

Ms. Cole is being supported by the Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association (NRARA) among other organizations. Saleh Waziruddin of NRARA adds “we have seen many Black residents in Niagara are targeted by racist neighbors who try to use the police or bylaw enforcement to harass Black people to leave. It's important for the broader community to show support so that the message is clear, this type of intimidation won't work and is not going to be tolerated.”

The Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association was founded in the summer of 2018 and campaigns on police reforms, municipal anti-racism committees, employment equity, organizes speaker series and workshops, and supports individuals under racist attacks.

Note to media: interviews with Natalee Cole can be arranged via media contact in header.

Attachment: anonymous letter threatening neighbours will burn Ms. Cole's house with her inside.