

# Commission on Human Rights

## **Kentucky Human Rights Commission Executive Director John Johnson statement on news report of fire official alleged mistreatment of African American family in car accident in Bullitt County**

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Contact Information: Victoria Stephens

Commission Headquarters: 1.800.292.5566

Stephens's Mobile Telephone: 502.641.0760

Kentucky Commission on Human Rights Executive Director John J. Johnson expressed the commission's dismay today upon reading a news report of Nov. 20 by Salon.Com and covered by WDRB Television news in Louisville, Ky.

The report said: "In September, Southeast Bullitt Fire Chief Julius Hartfield was recorded on a Bullitt County Sheriff deputy's body camera during a response to a traffic accident, when Hartfield allegedly refused to help a black family while referring to them in derogatory, racist terms... When [reporter Valerie] Chinn, who is Asian-American, contacted Hartfield to ask about the alleged disparities in his treatment of the two families as well as possible mismanagement of his department, the fire chief offered a startling (also racist) response.' Read here: [http://www.salon.com/2014/11/20/kentucky\\_fire\\_chief\\_refuses\\_to\\_help\\_black\\_family\\_after\\_traffic\\_accident\\_we\\_aint\\_taking\\_no\\_n\\_gers\\_here/](http://www.salon.com/2014/11/20/kentucky_fire_chief_refuses_to_help_black_family_after_traffic_accident_we_aint_taking_no_n_gers_here/)

Executive Director Johnson said: "The allegations asserted in news reports regarding a fire chief in one of Kentucky's counties are alarming and reflect a mentality that should have long passed. The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights urges Bullitt County officials to investigate any such matter and to take appropriate action regarding allegations of discrimination. It is critical that constituents be able to trust and rely on public officials whose job it is to protect the very lives, safety and physical well-being of the public."

The Kentucky Commission on Human Rights is the state government authority that enforces the Kentucky Civil Rights Act (Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 344), and, through its affiliation with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, enforces federal civil rights laws.

The Kentucky Civil Rights Act makes it illegal to discriminate against people in the areas of employment, financial transactions, housing and public accommodations. Discrimination is prohibited in the aforementioned areas based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, and disability. In employment, discrimination is further prohibited on the basis of age (40-years and over) and on the basis of tobacco-smoking status. In housing, discrimination is further

prohibited based on familial status, which protects people with children in the household under the age of 18-years old, and it protects women who are pregnant. It is also a violation of the law to retaliate against a person for complaining of discrimination to the commission.

For more information, contact the commission at 1.800.292.5566. For information about the commission and civil rights, visit the website at [www.kchr.ky.gov](http://www.kchr.ky.gov)