



Stand Up Nashville! Calls on Neighborhood Groups, Community Activists, Residents to Mobilize, Organize Against Unjust July Referendum

Defeat Critical in Fight for Working Families, Communities of Color

(Nashville)—Odessa Kelly, executive director of Stand Up Nashville (SUN), said today that the grassroots advocacy organization has begun mobilizing its members to fight against the July referendum, which would disproportionately impact communities of color and working families.

“I know Nashville’s communities and I know the real harm this shameful referendum would have on our working families and struggling neighborhoods—the same people who have borne the brunt of the COVID-19 and economic crises,” Kelly said.

“If the right-wing extremists behind it win, the result could deal a fatal blow to these communities. Public employees—from firefighters to public health workers—would lose their jobs. Teachers would lose pay. The services our neighborhoods, businesses and most vulnerable residents count on would be cut, and other programs could disappear. We cannot let that happen. That’s why we are going to fight so hard to defeat this unjust referendum on July 27.”

[Stand Up Nashville](#) is a grassroots organization that advocates on behalf of working people and communities of color for economic inclusion, racial equality, and government accountability.

Odessa Kelly is a native of Nashville. She attended Stratford High School and upon graduation in 2000 went to Tennessee State University, where she received her degree in Business Administration. Odessa also holds a master’s degree in Public Service from Cumberland University. Before becoming the executive director of Stand Up Nashville, she built her career in the public sector as a civil servant for Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation for 14 years, leading at Napier Community Center. Odessa was recently named as the 2019 national Eleanor Roosevelt Legacy Award recipient for her trailblazing work across this country. She was also one of the six 2019 National Courage Award recipients, Nashville Scenes 2018 Activist of the Year and was also awarded the 2018 Human Rights Rising Advocate award.