

## **Stand in Solidarity with the Atlanta 61 Codefendants**

### **Sign the Statement**

Sign on to this Statement of Solidarity with those being criminalized for opposing the construction of Cop City.

Since 2022, more than 100 people have been arrested on trumped up charges of domestic terrorism, arson, money laundering, charity fraud, and trespass, among others. On August 29, Attorney General Chris Carr indicted sixty-one people under Georgia's Racketeer Influenced and Corruption (RICO) Act. This is a clear effort by the state to silence dissent, and all those arrested and indicted need our strong support!

### **The Purpose**

The following statement was drafted by supporters of the more than 100 people arrested in defense of the Weelaunee Forest, and in resistance to Cop City, a massive \$110 million training facility proposed by the Atlanta Police Department and funded in part by the Atlanta Police Foundation.

**The intent of the statement is to provide a public platform for organizations around North America to express their collective opposition to these charges.**

### **Email to Sign**

To add your organization to the list of endorsers, email:

**[weelauneethefree@proton.me](mailto:weelauneethefree@proton.me)**

### **Demand the Charges be Dropped**

We are calling on the Georgia Attorney General to:  
**(1)** drop the RICO charges filed against 61 brave souls, and **(2)** stop the pursuit of pending charges against any Cop City protestor arrested since 2021.

### **Solidarity Signatures List**

View the growing list of organizations that have signed on to endorse this statement and the outlined demands at **[weelauneethefree.org/solidarity-statement](https://weelauneethefree.org/solidarity-statement)**

# Atlanta 61: RICO Charges Overview

This overview is to raise awareness on why these people got involved, the repression they are facing today, and why you need to sign to stand in solidarity with all 61 RICO charges being dropped.

Since Spring 2021, a grassroots movement in Atlanta has prevented construction for what would become the largest police training facility in the US. The Atlanta Police Foundation (APF) seeks to turn 300 acres of the Weelaunee forest into a tactical training compound, featuring a mock city, with the intention of further militarizing the US police force. Another 170 acres of forest are being threatened by a film production company, Shadowbox Studios, which plans to turn the adjacent Intrenchment Creek Park into the largest movie soundstage complex in America. This model of police training is not an issue that only affects the Atlanta community, as this is a design ready to be utilized nationwide with leaders of many cities, like Baltimore, endorsing their development with corporate backing.

Residents have opposed this project by every means possible, utilizing student walk-outs, speak-outs at City Hall, marches, sabotage, and over a year-long encampment inside the forest. More than 116,000 Atlantans signed a referendum petition that would put Cop City on the ballot which is more than those that voted in the last primary election cycle and double the amount of what is needed to put a referendum on a ballot. The city is doing everything they can to block the referendum, like stating organizers missed the submission deadline even though it was moved to the end of September 2023. Cop City's contractors and funders all over the country have been pressured by protestors to drop their contracts and divest from the project. Because the movement has built serious power in defense of the earth and in resistance to policing, it is facing unprecedented repression. Atlanta's government leadership is getting away with abandoning a democratic process, disenfranchising Black, Brown, and low-income people through voter suppression efforts, and enforcing legal action against anyone opposing a Cop City in a way that has never been witnessed before in the US.

While no petition-based or majority-vote approach proposed by Atlanta residents are being heard, people are showing up to protest. Protestors occupying the Weelaunee forest to prevent deforestation and general Cop City development have faced police brutality. On January 18, 2023, during a multi-agency police raid into the Weelaunee forest, police shot and killed Manuel "Tortuguita" Teran. An autopsy revealed that Tortuguita's hands were raised when they were murdered by the police, and that they were seated cross-legged.

In an effort to criminalize the Stop Cop City movement, the state has arrested over 100 people on fabricated charges related to the movement. Forty-one have been arrested on domestic terrorism charges for simply being in the forest or being at a protest. The local nonprofit bail fund, which has provided support to people arrested at protests over the last decade, faces money laundering and charity fraud charges. In September 2023, sixty-one people were indicted under the State of Georgia Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act and are being tried in Fulton County. Do not let Atlanta criminalize the people that are bravely practicing their constitutional right to protest, protecting the environment and land of indigenous people, and demanding that the state follow legal protocol when developing within the Atlanta community.

## Demand the Charges Be Dropped

Sign the Solidarity Statement, adding your organization to the list of endorsers, by emailing:

**[weelauneethefree@proton.me](mailto:weelauneethefree@proton.me)**