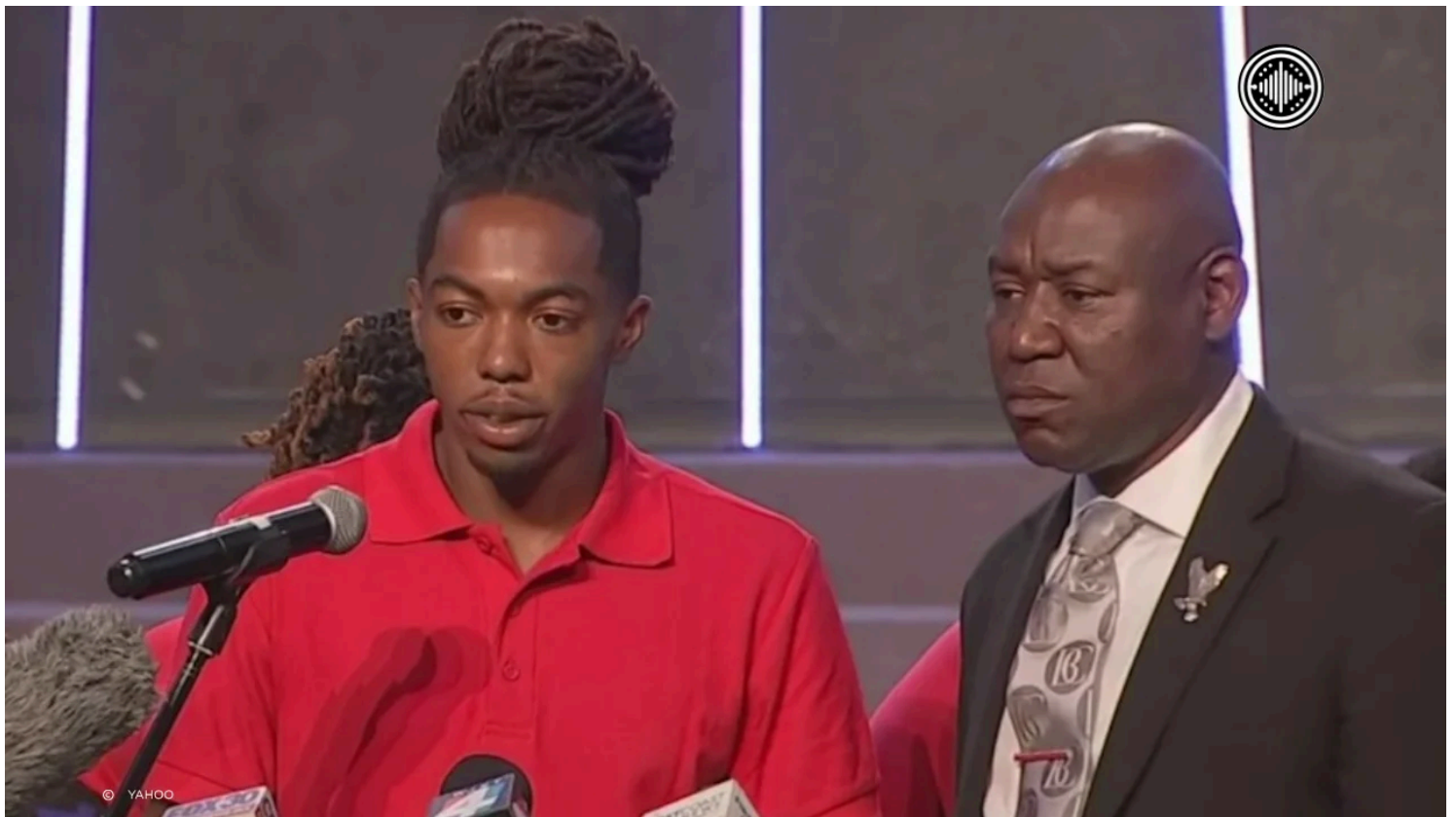


Student Assaulted by Police During Traffic Stop Speaks Out

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— Categories: Human Rights



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A 22-year-old biology student, William McNeil Jr, has publicly addressed a violent encounter with police during a traffic stop in Jacksonville, Florida, which left him with a concussion, a broken tooth, and a pierced lip. The incident, captured on McNeil's car-mounted camera, has ignited widespread debate about police conduct and accountability in the United States.

In a press conference held on 22 July 2025, McNeil recounted the traumatic ordeal, stating, “I just wanted to know why I was being pulled over and why I had to get out of the car. I knew I hadn’t done anything wrong. I was terrified.” The footage shows McNeil requesting to speak with a supervisor, after which officers shattered his car window, punched him in the face, dragged him from the vehicle, and struck him again. Reports confirmed that an officer delivered six closed-fist punches to McNeil’s thigh while he was on the ground.

Civil rights lawyer Ben Crump, representing McNeil, condemned the officers’ actions, asserting, “William had every right to ask why he was being stopped and to request a supervisor. This was a 21st-century Rosa Parks moment, where a young African American demanded equal justice and respect under the law.” Crump’s remarks underscored concerns raised by McNeil’s legal team that race may have influenced the officers’ aggressive response.

The Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office is conducting an internal investigation, but a separate probe by the State Attorney’s Office has already cleared the officers of criminal wrongdoing, a decision McNeil’s lawyers have fiercely contested. Critics argue the ruling reflects a broader failure to hold law enforcement accountable, particularly in cases involving minority citizens.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, speaking on 22 July 2025, defended the police, suggesting the viral video was being used to push a divisive “narrative” for social media attention. “There’s a rush to judgment in these cases,” DeSantis remarked, adding that he has “every confidence” in Sheriff T.K. Waters, who has cautioned against judging the incident based solely on the footage. DeSantis further stated, “If people step out of line, they will be held accountable,” though he admitted he had not personally reviewed the video.

The incident has fuelled calls for reform, with McNeil’s legal team vowing to seek justice. Crump told the press, “America stands at a crossroads. We are a democracy, not a police state where officers act without accountability.” As the investigation continues, the case raises pressing questions about policing practices and the balance between authority and individual rights in modern America.