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## **Empower Missouri Responds to Release Of 2015 Vehicle Stops Report Data**

### ***Joins Call for Passage of Fair & Impartial Policing Act***

(JEFFERSON CITY, Missouri)....Empower Missouri has studied the Vehicle Stops Report (VSR) data annually since 2009, focusing especially on categories of actions that occur after a vehicle is stopped, for example consent searches and resisting arrest charges. “This year’s data shows that, statewide, African American drivers consented to a search only slightly more frequently than European American drivers, down significantly from 2009. But 10 departments with significant numbers of consent searches had disparity factors of 3 to 1 or higher for African American or other minority drivers,” said Don Love, chair of the Empower Missouri Human Rights Task Force.

Love continued, “Of special concern are the 11 departments that had disparity factors of 3 to 1 or higher for resisting arrest charges, more than 11 to 1 for one department. Officers should be trained to de-escalate tense situations. Communities with high disparities related to resisting arrest and other post-stop interactions should seek dialogue with departmental leadership and request an explanation for the disparities.”

According to research conducted by Empower Missouri, several departments in Missouri have invested in training for personnel around best practices, including examination of implicit bias, unrecognized internal attitudes that can influence human interactions. Many of those departments show improved outcomes around reducing disparities in the VSR data that correlate to race/ethnicity, evidence that fair and impartial policing can be achieved.

Empower Missouri ([www.EmpowerMissouri.org](http://www.EmpowerMissouri.org)) advocates for the well-being of all Missourians through civic leadership, education, and research. Founded in 1901, the organization has operated under four names, including Missouri Association for Social Welfare from 1933 until 2014, and has focused continuously on improving public policy in order to ensure access to basic human needs and to promote equity.

For detailed analysis of the VSR data, see: <http://empowermissouri.org/press/press-packets/>

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