

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **TAJA's Coalition Calls for a Day of Action in the Spirit of Taja de Jesus**

*Call to action issued for Trans\* Liberation Tuesday on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> 2015*

(San Francisco, California, February 9, 2015) – The Trans\* Activists for Justice and Accountability Coalition (“TAJA”) is united in anger and outrage over the murder of Taja de Jesus. TAJA's Coalition includes leadership from: TGI Justice Project, El/La Para Translatinas, Trans March, Community United Against Violence, Transgender Law Center, St. James Infirmary, The SF LGBT Center, Trans Employment Program (TEEL), TRANS:THRIVE, Dimensions Clinic, Center of Excellence for Transgender Health, and Trans Life at the SF AIDS Foundation.

Taja Gabrielle de Jesus was stabbed to death on the streets of San Francisco's Bayview neighborhood on February 1, 2015. Taja was only 36 years old and friends and family describe her as a sweet, light-hearted and caring woman with a passion for music and a love for fashion. She was deeply involved in her community and her faith, volunteered at her local food bank, always had a smile and a story to share and constantly lit up a room. Taja was close to her family in San Jose and found acceptance and community in San Francisco. She remained positive and resilient in the face of many struggles and was relentless in pursuing her wellness.

Taja is the fourth known trans\* woman of color to be violently murdered in California in the last four months and the fifth to be violently murdered in the United States in 2015. We recognize this epidemic of violence as being deeply rooted in systemic racism, trans\* misogyny, class inequity, and lack of access to affordable housing for trans\* communities. This is a national crisis in which the most vulnerable members of our community are fighting for their lives. In Taja's memory, we will not relent in demanding justice.

Our communities are chronically underserved, over-policed and criminalized, and subject to violence at every turn. Trans\* women of color are up to 7 times more likely to feel unsafe in their daily lives than cisgender people, and experience pervasive safety concerns about where to live, socialize, and receive basic services according to a just-released LGBTQ Violence Prevention Needs Assessment compiled by the SF LGBT Center and the San Francisco Human Rights Commission – a full report will be released Tuesday, Feb. 10th.

A call to action has been issued for: **Trans\* Liberation Tuesday on Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> 2015** to demand an end to the systemic violence targeting trans\* communities. The agenda for the action is:

1:30pm: Gather at SF City Hall for a Die In and Press Conference (Polk St) to insist on no business as usual in San Francisco and offer TAJA's Coalition's 3 demands.

3:00pm: City Board of Supervisors Meeting Public Comment Period

Following the City Board of Supervisors meeting: continuation of Trans\* Liberation Tuesday with public presence throughout the afternoon and evening. No business as usual.

*Please note: Cisgender people and white trans\* allies are asked to review the participation guidelines on the Facebook event page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/578654548935579/>*

**TAJA's Coalition has issued the following demands** in advance of Tuesday's action:

- 1. We demand that cisgender people end violence against trans\* communities**, and particularly transgender women of color. Transphobia and violence against trans\* people is not a trans\* problem. It is a problem rooted in and created by cisgender people, and there is a call to see active support of and participation in local and national efforts to create resources, access and justice for our trans\* communities.
- 2. Trans\* communities need safety and access to resources, not jails. We demand that all plans for a new jail in San Francisco be ceased**, and that no new jail construction is included in any City planning or budget **with funds being routed instead to trans\* community programming**, especially re-entry support and anti-violence work, with respect for the depth of work not the quantity.
- 3. We demand safe, affordable, and accessible housing for trans people.** The rising cost of living in San Francisco, fueled by municipal protections for corporate interests at the expense of our most vulnerable residents, has forced countless trans\* people into unsafe living situations. Additionally, the massive gentrification of the Mission, Tenderloin, and SOMA neighborhoods in the past two years has displaced countless residents. San Francisco must shift its priorities away from protecting corporations and toward providing affordable housing for all who need it and particularly creating affordable housing services, safe housing programs and more safe spaces for trans\* people.

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**#TurnUp4TAJA #TurnUp4TransPeople #TransLiberationTuesday**

Trans\* is an umbrella term that is used to include folks who identify as transgender and transsexual as well as other identities where a person does not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

[www.TAJAsCoalition.org](http://www.TAJAsCoalition.org)

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