Carrie Hanson ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=E3_NJGLr8Jtc_YjKtRZwEH0ozPGKLoou4iX8FMSfMAcYGF2_PT4Pw6CN8FsNZr9SYAhzTVhL6sY4iRZI9gRqGgsMY_8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.21)):

Hello, and welcome to the next audio cast of our new series, Racial and Social Injustice, Continuing the Conversation. I'm Carrie Hanson, I'm the editor of Public Management Magazine for the International City County Management Association.

Carrie Hanson ([00:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=S3xuYrbvdn-omJgWC_0RNkrzS9Bi_4wy79oE_KVJCNaH2ZVzgVZKCnflaC1QP9ZcAh4Ok9bT4K5X4WlkP034a8Xym4o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=13.29)):

Joining me today is Kurt Wilson. Dr. Kurt Wilson is a local government advocate, researcher and educator. Kurt's career spans more than two decades for cities, two state agencies and two federal agencies. In addition to a city manager background, his local and statewide law enforcement roles have included frontline, oversight, regulatory, communications, recruitment and training. He came to Stockton 10 weeks after the city became the largest American city to ever file for bankruptcy protections. He served as city manager through the unprecedented recovery that exited bankruptcy and included earning three All American City Awards and earning the ranking of second most fiscally healthy large city in America. Kurt is a current board member of Cal-ICMA and the Davenport Institute at Pepperdine University. He is the former president of the city manager's department for the league of California cities and a member of the California City Management Foundation. Kurt, thank you so much for speaking with me today.

Kurt Wilson ([01:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OxAggnpqFt1FFtQQ8Be_POyFvGOjd6oLOcuHw6yf-3OwTcMC2a4Q9vrNu0iLSdrDUx8OH2iCpQ4ePToHgZitPW6-Flc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=74.12)):

Thanks for having me.

Carrie Hanson ([01:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ne8Wwq1biSWH56aJyunrOkgKjuodMMfnviW-9FeMBGlpq-NR38rJPPIAM0E7oPUbj99B7Uti3PIqZp_KR5pHHEHw33I&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=76.88)):

A little bit about your background. Kurt's career spans more than two decades, four cities, two state agencies and two federal agencies. You came to Stockton 10 weeks after the city filed for bankruptcy. After a year as deputy city manager, he was appointed as city manager to finish the bankruptcy process and implement the recovery strategy, which was very successful. Kurt is the vice president of the city manager's department for the League of California Cities, he's chair of the committee on diverse communities. He also serves as a board member, the California City Management Foundation and he serves as a lecturer, advisory board member and city manager in residence for several California universities. Given your extensive background, ICMA called upon you to contribute to our special magazine supplement. It's called, Moments of Change, Leading With Courage and Commitment for Racial and Social Justice. And Kurt wrote an article in the supplement titled, Beyond the Birdcage: Insights to Understand, Analyze and Improve.

Carrie Hanson ([02:13](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=WfcVjr1JuQE8MrLnPH9eOKYo4hn3HnwTmvkSCltyAMYJBfHXlOyntQ-sx8H8AWtkOwyETfj5awO-rxBbm_KBxvBJq2Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=133.79)):

I wanted to speak with you today to get more insight into your research, into systemic racism and your experience as a city manager. Let's get started. In your article, you mentioned conducting research for your doctoral thesis on the issue of systemic racism and the policing of Black America. Can you elaborate on that research and what conclusions you were able to draw from that? Or even what questions remain?

Kurt Wilson ([02:36](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ajB64iqerMT568mwjQuPlPOS5GDdqCofvtFhKYii1tGw47al-xJ6oK3nGignIpl-yIDlA0oKy8AXYrnvTVZxuIMMSmk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=156.86)):

Sure. The concept of systemic racism itself, so during the research process, so research is sort of intended to be objective. You sort of don't go into it with the kind of an answer already in your mind so you're not just trying to prove what you've already concluded. I didn't actually start out specifically assuming that there is systemic racism, although throughout the process of the research, I did find some specific examples of racism in different areas. There were certain agencies, for example, where it was clear that there are not only some specific individuals who have some sort of racial red flags, but there are some specific agencies as well. The interesting thing about it is that we spent a lot of time debating whether or not racism exists and systemic racism exists. And part of what the research showed is what we're really arguing about is the prevalence, not the existence.

Kurt Wilson ([03:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UYCucH4rKeFlci0ZwXTOsN3x14jNYCg9cZY6p9rrwtmjBXrExC_EIKRgFp9NAEhdMRoloaZnLd3GPoCPMI9B1UEbtSM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=223.9)):

You may hear someone from one title issue say, "Hey, law enforcement is racist. Cops are racist." And given the history, you can sort of see the path where you sort of get there of figuring out that there is some level of racism, but even cops will acknowledge that there is some level. There's one guy, from a law enforcement side, it's often dismissed as bad apples. The term bad apples implies that it's the few and that it's not the part of the greater portion. And the term systemic makes the implication that it is part of the system, it's widespread. While we fight over that stuff, we sort of ignore the part we actually agree on, which is at some level, it really does exist. Whether racism is one guy and one agency, or whether it's nearly every person in every agency, we all agree that it exists, at least in the most modest of forms.

Kurt Wilson ([04:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=DmSAagr8VaEo0R7k0APBy5PmpuZzLAsoV9XrNoKVkSuUR4039AaT58dbQFxrPg-_qLrMarIuSEov0lcYCJlsUv1_hSo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=291.7)):

And we're actually spending a lot of energy fighting over the prevalence. Is it a little bit? Is it a lot? And what the research showed really from the getting to a solution point is it doesn't matter. Obviously it matters how much racism we have in any institution, but as far as the solution, we actually could all agree that racism at any level is not an acceptable thing to have. Rather than fight over whether it's a little bit or whether it's a lot, we'd actually do better by focusing our energy on the part that we agree, which is racism itself is something that we should address. And if we can sort of get over that stumbling block and get out of our own way, I think we'd make a lot more progress.

Carrie Hanson ([05:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=u85JG9t3_qB3P72n5szHIHg8Td42m_kvG-Dq7LVneDJ8VbB8U6U0iJ0kG5nXEYl4bqvcTpfVAlsFB4pAB_WLPaL2AHI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=341.11)):

You mentioned the it wasn't me defense in which law enforcement officers want to be judged on their own actions instead of those of other officers from other situations. But obviously it's not that simple. Can you talk about that a little more?

Kurt Wilson ([05:54](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=VWR-RtHfJINLWLiYEN2DLC4X470utK7esimkjYjYTVc9c5uRcORVUNC7Y58cMan0CLgtLvtJBBQBvfJQxcovScyP4Ck&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=354.48)):

Sure. In the article, I use the example of a birdcage. You can see a bird cage by itself and it's sort of the goal of the cage is to confine. It's just sort of keep the bird in its place and stop it escaping or getting away and going free. You can sort of expand on that and make it sort of a bad thing. That its goal is this one thing of confinement, that it's sort of got this nefarious purpose. That cage though is made up of individual wires or bars and collectively they make up the purpose. They do the job of the cage. They do the confiding and do all those things. Individually, the bar by itself is sort of disconnected from the bigger piece. The bar may be there because it's giving the bird a place to stay, or it's holding the toy or doing something else.

Kurt Wilson ([06:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=fVBLpL0cudXRJh4eeSKnn1xUw9zMSYyv7Vx3-ipMd1LQC8wOD_X3QwpllooX0jYdZKYFeuWiuUDahTFCNGalSckrmTQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=408.76)):

It's a little imaginative, but there's some disconnect between the purpose and the motives and the goal of that particular wire and then the purpose, motive and goal of the birdcage as a whole. And that sort of is analogous to policing where we have the individual police officer, which is sort of like that wire and we have the birdcage, which would be the institution of policing. Each officer represents themselves in an individual capacity. How they conduct themselves and do all those things, represents them as an individual. It tells you a little bit about their values and how they were raised and their beliefs and are they good people, to go out and do those things? But they also represent a symbolic self.

Kurt Wilson ([07:40](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Y1vgWNFfMByZwjsSCXAl8EywGFrjs6sXDEAHI_g9wo-6ROBpst4-Edg4YIGYS_pFgq0q8vInOsnmpPT8OSfUd5Wh03k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=460.83)):

The symbol is the institution of racism, the institution of policing, the broader picture. They end up sort of in this dual role where every time we see an officer behave, we can make some judgements about them as a person, as an individual. And they have a lot of control over what they do as an individual, how they act, what they do in a specific circumstance, how they talk to people, how many people they help. They can sort of control that narrative. They can control what happens with them as an individual, but in their role as a symbol, they're representing the broader piece. When we see a high profile incident, we see something that happens on camera, that officer is now representing the symbol of in that case, his profession or her profession. That person's profession is now judged by what happened with that individual. That happens to both the officer and the suspect.

Kurt Wilson ([08:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=bpLH3T3bT2uLgWTXASMn_Ox9VC98kJKE92HjqJ4tGhNmSkjjQ_67DWiHKv_D3mvY3Sz0TBIhtxVmykToq2r_aA6VuD4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=525.32)):

If we look at the George Floyd case, George Floyd, acted as an individual, he did all those things as an individual. But the reason there was so much outrage is because he became a symbol. It becomes something sort of bigger than yourself. The dilemma for how we go forward is that as an individual, I can only control what I do as an individual. I can't actually control the bigger things that I symbolize. I can't control what happens with the whole institution. As an individual suspect, as an individual officer, I really can't control what happened 3,000 miles away last year in a different city. That's sort of out of my control. And that if we're looking for solutions, I think it's easy to sort of conflate the two, but the reality is when bad behavior happens, it needs to be addressed. We should punish the bad behavior, period.

Kurt Wilson ([09:45](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hPErxL7bMz6px_l4wmkpN3kNcIUQ7rclka6_vFMzMDqlC_azZae2VSg4JMPTvXGS_-ecPwo_wYDTYf4hc3ygojNZJ4Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=585.71)):

But as far as the symbol, the institution, you can't really punish an institution. You can't really punish the symbolic piece, but you can make changes. You can evolve it, you can reform it, you can improve it. You can do those things that make that system, that organization, that big picture, better, but you can't punish it effectively. Well, you can try to punish it, but you don't end up getting the results that you want. There's sort of this range. We use the term, I don't really know what they mean exactly, but good cop, bad cop.

Kurt Wilson ([10:18](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ZoDwu0_oerjEBf9rjm1Jfj7jAlmfBG0fPau5wlSWWGoDoxY5zp26RhrV_yXZOul-B6u9aLyT0VgCvXwSTTydAvtgyDQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=618.14)):

If we say, "Hey, that's a bad cop." And we say, "We should punish that bad cup." Most people would say, "Hey, that makes a whole lot of sense." But when we take that broad approach and we say, "Hey, let's punish all cops. Let's punish the symbol, the whole organization of it." We end up with a lot of pushback because the guy who is a good cop or recognized as a good cop says, "Wait a minute, why am I being punished? I'm not the one who actually did that." And as long as we sort of conflate the individual and the symptom and the symbol, we keep getting to that same place and we create a lot of pushback, which makes it slower for us to actually make progress in the things that we really agree on.

Carrie Hanson ([11:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LMUWuia1Ca0Qe2Qfy1AaYrFlOT2DpmB21HBPhSB3qF00049uPVYdpBLpBrbmxktKaxDzDHuHOoSeSQpg7Gdb9-aX66Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=663.28)):

Oh, that's interesting. There are five action items at the end of your article and I wanted to examine one of those. It states, don't rely solely on legislative remedies and don't target technical issues without consulting technical experts. What does that mean for local government leaders? And then how can they put that advice into action?

Kurt Wilson ([11:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eiRMh0DOJ0Bp6I4r6Th3_g8XkVFyKDHx4mWRV71r0roRZ3nEwBzHVEfXIZZxFvYIgDkj1gk8xSb5BTM08psKbL0M6V0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=693.08)):

There are two things with it. First the idea of legislation. Legislation is sort of this core thing. We have all these different layers of rules that we follow. We have this legislation, usually say it's by state level, for example. And then individual cities or counties will sort of fine tune that based on their specific needs, but it's sort of got to comport with the state version. And then we have the same concept with federally. We all have to go along with the Constitution so we've got these certain things, very, very broad things. And then they get more specific at the state level, then more specific at the jurisdiction level and then policy. We go through that bit where it keeps getting fine tuned based on our individual needs, but legislation itself is very broad. It's intended to cover sort of all situations. It's supposed to be applied evenly. It's for all situations for everybody that falls within that. It's very broad.

Kurt Wilson ([12:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=a_T6L59yC_Qtf0uJgxLhclBWHNzx8nbiu7rBxHs4Ob3Ppcv6BRBHBbISzqZGU6ZIzNNycWStSSvcdA4ldvzl84mOGKY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=752.87)):

But because of that, it's got to be, it's somewhat like the floor. There's sort of, it's not really the goal of where we want to be, it's sort of the minimum. We have legislation that says, "Murder is wrong. Shouldn't kill people." That makes sense. We can all agree we shouldn't kill people. Most people would agree the standard that we actually follow should be a little bit higher so we should actually do more than just not kill people. But the legislation sets that floor saying, "You can't go below this." We take our values, we take our local applications and we sort of elevate that and get it to a better place. The higher place The real solutions require getting to that higher place and legislation is just not designed to do that all by itself. There's a clear role for legislation, but it's not designed to do that sort of all by itself.

Kurt Wilson ([13:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=apYKZDfHJXRTaihegFEcZZ1yHPWzELzmH9THgBX5y9f_fUhzm7FrngeUkdt67Y1nPhIYhElufUPo-1fgjANf84FGGD0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=807.34)):

And even getting there, legislation when done properly is a slow process. It's the sausage making process doesn't happen quickly and there's good reasons for that. It makes it not very adaptive. The types of issues we're talking about are these adaptive issues. The Kennedy School at Harvard speaks about these adaptive issues that are sort of these messy kind of hairy, complicated. There's no clear answer to it. And that's really what we're talking about here. That requires sort of this higher level thinking, this higher level processing and analysis to get there. But a component of this issue also has technical things. While everyone has a stake and can weigh in on some big picture items related to this and say, "Hey, we don't think having interactions between the community and police should have bad endings. We think we should look for ways to improve that."

Kurt Wilson ([14:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Df5cpTUL0VOizHC30C04lCe6MEPcbSRrmW0K28RnzvjelEX_WYYOYEv5XPl28nOXfR755K38pe5EvXz8xqYrZKGCuzQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=870.15)):

Everybody can agree with that. Everybody's got a stake in that. We sort of get to a good place. But when we're talking about some technical things, so it could be operational things within the police department about should a certain type of ammunition be used? Or during a traffic stop, should the officer use a driver's side approach? Some of these things are technical and while it's tempting for everyone to sort of weigh in, not everyone is an expert. When we go on social media, we find that everyone is an expert. Everything from epidemiology, to police practicing, to a world affairs, to all those wonderful things. But the reality is there's some types of problems that are very technical and require a technical approach. A lot of times when we're talking about evaluating and we see this in other professions, if we're going to evaluate whether a teacher did the right thing in the classroom, or whether the dentist properly filled that cavity and did some of those things, there's a component where we actually need some technical expertise.

Kurt Wilson ([15:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=L5DpB0ETPhS_lMNnQEWyQKS810f8014FHALV06VDwpeNq9ujIRyjLMX-ChEZO3ifcC-xotC-Xw31nQtFYjK6vIe27WI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=932.97)):

Either we have to have it ourselves, or we have to have access to it. And when legislative options are rushed, that's the part that usually gets skipped. In the case of policing, there really are some technical components of this. And we've had a lot of cases where people have had the best of intentions and they've moved forward with some solutions that really didn't get what they wanted, because there were some technical obstacles, not just political obstacles or policy differences, but some technical obstacles that were overlooked because they didn't make use of the actual technical expertise that could have helped them in the process.

Carrie Hanson ([16:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=q1G8C13PORN-eIAio6GmF9PZaiCmvvHdoL8-_d_utW7qhLqea72z_wRcILrSmZH83Q8oqfslAsvx8fidapovZO5jYFk&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=977.11)):

Wow. Yeah. That makes a lot of sense. Although this is a complicated issue with differing views, is there one concept that you wish people understood most?

Kurt Wilson ([16:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=UBZHfHY-sbUhaf3YCWDOSIFXZnIviJnjG0M7pvs-lJx6Y1t0cFiOHmKLTaBiX98hYxRd5A1yY2K3imh_HXnZaPNfJCQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=987.96)):

Yes. It's really the mismatch. I think when we're evaluating issues around use of force, with very few exceptions, the force that we're discussing is not something that was just made up out of thin air, like hey, there's absolutely no scenario where this type of thing can be used. Now, there are examples of that, but they're rare generally. What happens is, okay, the officer used this piece of equipment or the officer shot or the officer did so and so and there generally are cases. There are cases when I think most people could agree that officers should discharge a weapon. The disagreement is over which cases those are, but there are cases where that should happen. Or there are cases where an officer should use some level of force or do some of those things. The conflict is when those are misapplied.

Kurt Wilson ([17:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=RyuVjc9GTkoTEKJNGxwMmu0wO0a-ADg2kc2Cu6L-JjLrnwin2RccMdCLBhcgGeOHYGgVUzbEZF_y2vj4xR1xqUSY63c&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1046.12)):

In law enforcement, there's something called a combat color code, which is essentially the idea that depending on the type of situation you're in, that's sort of how you react. When you're doing traffic control, or you're doing a public relations event and hanging out with children, you're sort of in this mode of friendly and smiling and shaking hands and being nice to everyone and making people feel comfortable and feel competent. You act a certain way, your guard is very down, you're just very friendly. And there's sort of a serious that goes along with that.

Kurt Wilson ([18:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=KE-9ma04qBJicT_9aQ925NWyuaR90FBVAU_GBNEVGd7UOWIp0bDu8qrCUeFCshBk3wrplKtMRhDLXHP_nX_-H_XZljY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1081.51)):

On the other end of that is when you're in the fight of your life, or when you're responding to a man with a gun call, you're going somewhere where you know somebody is out there shooting at people. You're going to respond very differently. It's not responding in sort of the mindset of hi, how are you? Let's wave and let's be happy with everyone. You're really on alert saying, "Hey, my life could be in danger. The citizens around me, they're lives could be in danger. There's a lot going on here. I'd better be on edge because if I react too slowly, it's not going to end well." In cases where those things are aligned, meaning the officer shows up expecting the same sort of thing that's actually going on, those tend to end very well. Those aren't the issues that we have a lot of problems and disagreements and struggles over. There are cases, but it's generally when there's a mismatch.

Kurt Wilson ([19:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=cdozPNol-RqYbGfLLxq16hlzZaSt215WcRAmrc6m2LOlU5FpWufxFH_kuDc65dnIzT9Ac6Eduay2kmcCfwGhnSQ4wJ8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1140.66)):

That happens either, usually when we have the headlines it's because the officer started off more aggressive than the situation called for. If the officer is going in, thinking, oh my goodness, lives are at stake, I'd better be ready. I better respond quick. I've got to react. I've got to do all these things. And it turns out it was something very simple, that's where the overreaction comes from. From the officer's standpoint, the concern is the other way around. If it's something where there's real danger, there's an active shooter, there's something else going on and the officer approaches it not ready. The officer is just kind of hanging out and in that parade kind of mindset of hey, everybody's friendly here, then the officer ends up getting hurt. We've seen lots of examples on both ends, but we generally stop the conversation right there. We say, "Ha! That happened, therefore things are bad." For the cops, when they end up on the wrong side of it, they end up getting hurt and then it's easy to make the generalization that see, we've got to look out for ourselves because they're all bad.

Kurt Wilson ([20:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=0f2yf-qQ_HruLdBF7PbJXlTpEhOnxH5tGUq-A3o4WwLr7mdjW57BVfb99W30CIKFGb-INCD7KZ39zlIOxxBUlWn-7Vg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1217.01)):

It's easy to get to that place because that's who was victimized. When it's the community member who was hurt because of what really ends up being an overreaction of the officers or a misinterpretation or a mismatch on behalf of the officer, then the general narrative is the officer must be racist. And given the history of policing and the history of examples that everyone's had. I mention in the article, I literally don't know anyone who looks like me, who hasn't had some bad experiences with law enforcement, but I know a lot of individual officers who have never done those bad things and that's sort of that mismatch. Given that, it's not quite as far fetched as it may seem to say, "The officer must be racist."

Kurt Wilson ([21:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=nUrZWvRrvMRsImZfy_RKJiidMVwtcVT1YbFNMhPcCVWJmam4-4hoNJl3dfH4hCtPmzNG3g5qQANOqmhnSqvBSjMGe2E&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1264.42)):

In the event the officer was racist, yes, that would make sense and that would sort of explain that outcome, but we tend to stop there without looking at other options. While that's one option, it's not the only option. If the officer was in fear, we're going to end up with a similar thing so that use of force is really the symptom, it's not the cause. The symptom is going to look the same, whether it really is racism or whether it's fear or even whether the officer was just misinformed. Meaning the 911 caller lied and described a threat that wasn't actually real so we end up in this spot where the symptom is going to look the same, but if we're going to really try to figure out the solution, we can't stop with the symptom, we have to figure out what the actual cause is because the solution is going to be very different.

Kurt Wilson ([21:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=bkbybAKkSu8zrWehIRQmEY7xGpztD_1HjEOVkGegVpILVMdw-V9pbvCq8XuYqgYvQhtvIahMHC8fxnzFqJSUtUBhiQs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1316.54)):

If the issue was that the officer got bad information from the 911 caller, then that's going to be a very different solution than if the officer is just a bad person. If we don't know what the actual cause is, we can't move forward. We have to do the full diagnosis and we can't diagnose the issue based on the symptom because the symptom of a bad outcome looks the same for a number of those different areas. And when we really take a look at what's going on and sort of all the things that have gotten everyone's attention and all the red flag incidents, the vast majority of them come down to really a mismatch between the force that was used and the force that was needed. But we owe it to ourselves to really look for solutions and we can't apply solutions just based on the symptoms.

Carrie Hanson ([22:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lE-rxbS3Wz1VRQEJsGD4xXdYvMeH7so_rCMMnMz7Zxif4VH5BfCEKwmWZObeOBMJCCHJIWOcQek3NnZbvfmvcjdwQI0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1377.19)):

Oh, that's interesting. This is clearly an important moment in history and hopefully the start of meaningful lasting change and thinking to the future, what can the next generation of local government leaders learn from this moment in time?

Kurt Wilson ([23:10](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vvmNMA0K6IYhh6ak6uANOI-bTdMDmP1MZRWHknTJpu1fAiEmzfcScGhlSTYpBtEryu2TC3mRKVYSkh0u4Nd0-Pa8lAU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1390.92)):

I think timing is really the issue. It's easy to sort of become complacent. At this moment in time, this is top of mind for everyone. Hey, issues of race and equity and injustice. Oh my goodness. Let's go all in. And every institution, every organization, everybody is all in on this, but when we really take a look at issues of race and equity and injustice throughout our nation's history, this is really just sort of a moment in time. There's nothing here that's so compelling that I feel confident that this is actually the new norm and we're going to go forward. I think what's really happening is for this moment in time, this is what we're focused on. In a little while, we will switch off to a different topic because that's historically what we've done. We've done this, even the things that have happened right now are not even the most egregious or not even the most hair-raising incidents in the history of issues around race and equity and injustice.

Kurt Wilson ([24:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ga7F6Xq9myYaesf9sei3W1xIPmA3Ni_jpPBbugdXmtYXCBm0K7U1dne2DYdZfPS0IBNRhg9AVxC1DFhzq5KiZSMz3pc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1454.62)):

And at each one of those moments, when you go back, immediately following the incident was when it was top of mind, everyone was all in making these permanent commitments and those permanent commitments soon fade. Timing is a big deal, whether it's this issue or any other issue, it's really around sort of getting that critical mass so that you can make the change to make some progress. We look at the civil rights movement. There were a few critical pieces in there that sort of turned the tide and really it wasn't about the people on the ends. It wasn't about the two sides that were deeply engaged in the fight becoming even more entrenched. It was the people in the middle, the people sort of on the fence, because that's the bulk of people.

Kurt Wilson ([25:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=DYkfU5qb5OYS4raKqRktVHmh4K0U3LRuhh5ic_7OT0xoNDG1PpyROKmpQ1ngVbLWKZM_3aIBNXaVLy-g6g3Jst4IY48&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1503.38)):

Even in this issue, there are folks on the law enforcement side and folks within the Black community, for them this is a big issue. It's deep. It's never going to go away. For most of America, it's not really that big a deal. It's not something that they pay a lot of attention to, it doesn't affect them. To get the critical mass needed for policy change, requires engaging those people in the middle. It requires getting them on board and you can do that best when they're listening and right after an incident like this is when they're listening. In Stockton with the bankruptcy, it's right after the bankruptcy that people were engaged in listening to the concept of making prudent fiscal decisions and doing that. But like any issue, that soon fades. The timing is so critical because immediately after the incident is when you've got to make the move. In the civil rights movement, Emmett Till was a significant moment in time because his mother, Mamie Till, managed to get Jet Magazine to publish the photos of her son, of her little boy in Jet Magazine.

Kurt Wilson ([26:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=yCL3ezmfXKJD6fViWwW0ffiF86xVuv1SCmPXvRWJ__6x89eY23bl7HQo_swrGJwOlBz84yqOCmfB4dAH0zAVRPa8-30&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1574.72)):

And it was an awful, ugly, it was a horrible picture to look at, but it got the people in the middle, the people who were disengaged, who said, "It's not my problem. Oh, they must be exaggerating. How big a deal is it really?" It's sort of made it front and center so that they could no longer ignore it. And that was one of those times that sort of turned the tide because it caught the attention and it captured the hearts and minds of people who were otherwise not engaged.

Kurt Wilson ([26:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=PLVL87ID_vuW0ARh1par7ylYPzgr3Yi6qceFGUInjhdMC2hOFR_vhTNlDLnP8DSXs3PWV4n7CBrUGWqQjTJ9s9jnir0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1603.19)):

It's sort of similar to a political campaign where the two candidates for president are not spending their time trying to convince the other to vote for them, instead they're trying to convince the people in the middle to vote for them. It's a waste of energy to try to get a staunch all in Democrat to vote for a staunch all in Republican. That's not really where the most efficient use of their energy is. Instead, they focus on the middle.

Kurt Wilson ([27:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=O4MAvqgTeNdCessVxvvbZL6xkYJcm7XZ2FduBYTVJOO_C7lPyoZOdGoLtlkolPgedqSzSt_D-VcgP5VNahKKjVgfonU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1634.82)):

In this issue to make progress for lasting policy change, I think it's important to focus on the middle and in order to do that, timing's a big deal because you can only get people, you can only capture their hearts and their minds, you can only educate them when they're paying attention. Immediately after something, a time like this, is when they paid attention but if you don't act quickly, it's going to fade away because soon we're up to something else and that window of time will have closed.

Carrie Hanson ([27:48](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Tw2A1E4EpTBpG_fHn2hjehKwJXVYOEbqhuEs3_t2f2-F2W0x9LBOV_WVUtFZ5uPPQhOTVXfB43b3O1CNE3S7oPA1yAA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1668.53)):

Wow, absolutely. Well, Kurt, this has been great. Thank you so much for speaking with me today.

Kurt Wilson ([27:55](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OSGAoomRFjNoGxlnmGMCUbXGeyRZF9T6CntSBJMio829_iA_dS6ewW9rrcKTPRniVqW4RSg9njlRNxKeJu-ynbHRaJ0&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1675.25)):

My pleasure. Thanks for having me.

Carrie Hanson ([27:57](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=dlYVFDLXL12_wNlTcinJQxNeYwni45sDl-Fp5mvGRygZHpuNZLgmNBRJZstyDMtKwR5K5vizY-DYWMIkgZZCvukJBlI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1677.81)):

We greatly appreciate you joining us and for those listening, thank you for tuning into ICMA's new audio cast series, Racial and Social Injustice, Continuing the Conversation.

Carrie Hanson ([28:08](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=hMbbvjRPHxKj7pHTb5xmRieIcFKcBsr6Ikm2ACXFxr9-RTUZ4QQB3y6W2g1sEZVcwkjylmxxB98UITx1_yf5vKpdhwQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1688.53)):

All right. That's it. Thank you so much.

Kurt Wilson ([28:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=lDOKutuM5hRi7g4AUJURAsxo-QMwagLesD8-EoDJgMRqDIsjib_JYamgfoEwMDJwCUYQMUu23wPNsMp1H8wQOHS6soM&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1692.07)):

You got it. Just a couple things in the intro. As I was listening to it, I said, "Oh, I should mention those." It mentioned, let's see, there was VP of the, I think for the league.

Carrie Hanson ([28:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=FqbSF-sxKWqmQ_O_gw6dJFMbXl10JCRE2NUCpLMZlJbR1LcVN1-pwMNqIC-YhZ7ufLP6T6SaWHaBK2M95zufX_TcAJY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1709.64)):

Yeah. The city managers departments.

Kurt Wilson ([28:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=u_T5FDRAGwYy5fEOfSrbdtwcLnTrR-hYuHKCTwQ8Rp-twaHIE-l2jzuru6_VGAV7XMNP4b0AN1Sqh26RBpCFF8cB4-o&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1713.27)):

Right. Okay, so that's changed. I'm a past president of the city managers department for the league. I'm not currently doing anything with them, but I'm a past president.

Carrie Hanson ([28:44](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=qkVlciaEM7z7FpSaozNIkF7SPHdkdxvCcS3mjLZdmwu1MTWpohl8ywe7hJXbFN0mltUZqCiuNs59zAcE6UYzMgXEgq8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1724.81)):

Okay. Okay. Let me forward that over then just to make sure that that's correct. All right. Kurt is the past president of the city managers department for League of California Cities.

Kurt Wilson ([29:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=BeZFIAXYK-JB_BtKV88A9axWMUz30NsJYUv0nxOphxoSn2bMCLs3jLLUJcyVGFn2jFGlIA09yt2qEtqF2oQE0FWF_OU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1740.94)):

Right. And see CCMF I'm no longer on the board for CCMF. I'm a past board member for CCF and a current board member for Cal-ICMA.

Carrie Hanson ([29:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=YJxdtV62gOU0vtyvRq7PgFH8AdioN0bl7gSD3B4GQdSMe1OOmjkKceVHw-5ajtZmEyvqAr4zTkc0K4wBp0wuvFyJlpI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1754.27)):

Current board member for Cal-ICMA. All right. That's all of us.

Kurt Wilson ([29:25](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=G5dXXliYNWddK-VIwTjOcjIP9GDzDb_L6iJLVuquCUsspTANFaVV0qJw8BRJ5bcj8KqretLC61f2ABKyOOp8gfw9PJ8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1765.53)):

And I guess the only other one I would mention probably the Davenport Institute. I'm still tied to the Pepperdine University's Davenport Institute. I can email it to you, but the Davenport Institute over at Pepperdine.

Carrie Hanson ([29:39](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Tr-2fhsHXm5AtQ28mWozGnsuj6_OIeyecTZWAufIKkm6rY_qS7jSb2bBXOV1NkDR4ln4i-a5BOltoP1j6A1uzyh9TQQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1779.83)):

Okay. Yeah. You know what I'll do? I'll go ahead, I should have done this beforehand. I'll email you the paragraph that I have and then if you want to mark that up and make it exactly what you think it should be, then you can send it back and then I can record that on my own and then just have that into that section.

Kurt Wilson ([29:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=9pNn50kDBLCKcoFtHNXsgkdLyzEgVbbPPPchppsSV5wvzywP67WLPT3PJK_1Yz29bD9hGsmquV8jZZtj_PwlvXnBCXI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1799.58)):

That sounds perfect.

Carrie Hanson ([30:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=Pci61LVIGrOv_W97Fgt5Mp9yw4tA9NL5EctP6BenFTF-jyjvBpJVL69qiIUkdt_aHbE8CpNAodk1OwemYG3JlwLScZI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1801.2)):

Okay. Sounds good. Thanks for letting me know about that.

Kurt Wilson ([30:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=abPWLR24VnfcfznglwNLwXLDa9pgMEEPoFQg5MadqmZCbS3YeuWfXGQj_mGk9akLhtqeN7bD27AM7KS7ikY_hEG3tWA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1805.46)):

As you're doing that, I said, "Oh, I better do a better job about picking my stuff." Okay. Thanks so much.

Carrie Hanson ([30:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=VubTWJPZJsGeS_jDbfHjUA2RMH8xD2VTAtXt7Lz_40YQH-xTVNft4dMD-zSV3eKQe6e9HhqEUbh56xELOr33Da7X5GY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1812.55)):

Yeah. This is great. Thank you so much, Kurt. And what will happen is the audio will be edited and then it'll probably get up on our website maybe within the next two weeks, but I can send you an email and let you know when it's up there, just so you can see it.

Kurt Wilson ([30:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=PqJpxOClRfigkVWNmIbglt_mseUDGbyhXmA0bj0Y-p3cJaZxY9MaXqeyrtpid9xJ2KRN-_Aygb69Fc6KdUhdb3kcPTE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1828.23)):

Perfect.

Carrie Hanson ([30:29](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=ONWPRlg7Kep-F2Yes4QxbRjL6j7Zyh6886PApfnPm3F9KKb3hGuIKN8sCbRipUj9qmW9ODPfjRuuhPYBYGfAJOIqyK8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1829.34)):

Great. All right. Thank you. Have a great weekend and I really appreciate it.

Kurt Wilson ([30:34](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=eBpruQqntO68C0PU8VIUVtmTuYPFAQfAi4b8A0m7GIsfW5zw6IMUuwUIXstKjX77RBdCmtZRCVwJdgSzr34yty0XRVY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1834.28)):

Thank you. Have a great weekend.

Carrie Hanson ([30:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=QurKardG_ZRmsUjC1IvxV0HTR0aE10G4zpRk-qUjNDfHMlFP-Daj22e7iNUR1DMcwhzNfKr1OdeFPOy-b2432-I5PLo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1835.47)):

All right, bye bye.