



## **Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Indiana, Inc.**

• PO Box 44499 • Indianapolis, Indiana 46244-0499 •

On behalf of APABA-IN's Board Members:

The events of the past few weeks—the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, as well as the numerous incidents of explicit bigotry, bias, and brutality throughout our country's history—are disturbing, infuriating, and heartbreaking. The measure of a civilization and the character of our country is dependent on how we treat each other. Humanity demands that we be kind and respectful to each other. The Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Indiana (APABA-IN) stands in solidarity with the Black community in Indiana and across the country. We express our sincerest condolences to the families of the victims and vehemently condemn the killings of Black Americans – human lives that are irreplaceable and absolutely do matter.

We stand with those who seek justice through the peaceful protests taking place across our country. These protests are the manifestation of a marginalized community begging to be seen, heard, and treated as equals - as human. Undeniably, the right to assemble and peacefully protest is a protected right under the First Amendment of our Constitution, and the rule of law dictates that peaceful protests be allowed to take place. We likewise condemn any escalation of these protests into violence, which distracts from the goal of bringing awareness of systemic injustice to the forefront and is contrary to the wishes of George Floyd's family.

When there is an imbalance of power, our position as members of the Bar and our understanding of the rule of law makes it even more critical that we stand strong against injustice. We must speak out, demand change, and address deeply rooted racism in our society. We must work to create trust and fairness in our legal system by addressing systemic bias in the law to safeguard civil rights, civil liberties, and justice for all individuals.

As a starting point for continued dialogue about the reform needed to end racism in the justice system, we call for the following things:

1. We call upon all individuals to respect the rule of law by protesting peacefully and for our leaders, elected officials, and law enforcement officers to defend and protect every individual's constitutional right to peacefully protest. We applaud the Marion County Prosecutor's decision not to file charges against peaceful protestors.
2. We further call upon our leaders, elected officials, and law enforcement officers to begin and continue a dialogue with Black and minority communities on a local and national level and to commit our nation to a formal process of healing and reconciliation. Trust can only be established when there are open lines of communication and transparency. We applaud the incoming Dean of the IU McKinney School of Law for starting a dialogue by speaking out about the killing of George Floyd and its impact.
3. We call upon our leaders and elected officials to pass bipartisan legislation that would create a commission to study and evaluate law enforcement practices that unfairly target



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communities of color in the United States and to mandate more law enforcement training on diversity, cultural differences, and implicit bias. We support George Floyd's family's call to create a national task force that would develop bipartisan legislation aimed at ending systemic racism and violence and increasing police accountability.

4. We call upon our local, state, and national governments and the legal profession as a whole to take the steps necessary to increase the fairness and diversity of our justice system, from law enforcement officers to prosecutors and defense attorneys, the judiciary, and lawyers in law firms, corporations, and government sectors. Ensuring Black professionals and other persons of color are afforded equal opportunities and supporting their advancement to the highest levels will reflect our diverse communities in a more representative manner and promote increased fairness in our justice system. We applaud the Chief Justice of Indiana for issuing a statement on race and equity highlighting the role of the judicial system in achieving fairness and justice in our communities.

APABA-IN stands in solidarity with the Black community in seeking justice and reform at the local and national levels. We stand united with our affiliated Asian Pacific American bars and sister bar associations in speaking out against racism in all its forms.

Sincerely,

*Haroon Anwar,*  
*President of APABA-IN 2019-2020*

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The [Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Indiana](#) (APABA-IN) is a community of Indiana Asian Pacific American and Asian lawyers that supports one another, celebrates each others' accomplishments, creates opportunities for dialogue on issues of importance to APAs, and highlights APA issues to the legal community at large. APABA-IN is an affiliate of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA).



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WE ALL MUST JOIN TOGETHER TO CONFRONT  
SYSTEMIC RACISM AND PUT AN END TO BIGOTRY,  
BIAS, AND BRUTALITY AGAINST THE BLACK  
COMMUNITY.

