

June 2, 2020

## **A JOINT STATEMENT FROM MEMBERS OF THE WORCESTER TOGETHER COALITION**

Together we rise, together we stand, and together we change. On behalf of the Worcester Together Coalition, comprising more than 100 individuals and organizations formed in response to the COVID-19 crisis, we rise and we stand in condemnation of the brutal acts perpetrated by Minneapolis police officers in the murder of George Floyd. We stand in the name of countless Black lives lost at the hands of police and civil vigilantes and in the name of all Communities of Color that have and continue to experience institutional inequity and brutality. We seek to create and make change to shift the oppressive imbalances in our country in the name of all Communities of Color that have experienced profound loss including for George Floyd, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Alton Sterling, Sandra Bland, Botham Jean, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and for whom their families and communities have endured deep pain, anger, frustration, and fear because of systemic racism and inequity.

Silence is not an option. Action is paramount. Worcester Together has demonstrated our ability to act and respond in crisis through COVID-19. Today, we speak aloud in disgust and with deep sorrow for our community and our country, and to leverage our collective and unified power to act and make change. The devastating racial disparities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic are intrinsically related to our nation's history of white supremacy and structural racism. It is a legacy that we must reject and dismantle. As we seek to address the COVID-19 crisis and to build a fair and just "new normal" we commit ourselves to these principles in all that we do, both individually and collectively:

1. We will acknowledge the reality of white supremacy in our history and its insidious presence in our institutions, public school system, police department, community based organizations, and ways of doing business and will facilitate courageous conversations and frank discussion of the issues at hand as a community. We will recognize our inadvertent complicity in the perpetuation of this injustice.
2. We will approach every initiative, policy or program that we undertake as an opportunity to dismantle racism. We will do this explicitly and embrace accountability for our results.
3. We will consistently and promptly identify, name, question, and actively resist and denounce policies in our criminal justice, law enforcement, education and health institutions that injure people of color and deprive them of the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our community.
4. We will center, elevate and defer to voices of People of Color and support the economic advancement of Communities of Color by using our collective purchasing power to support locally owned Black, Latino, and immigrant businesses.

We are fallible humans acting in the name of humanity and cannot do this work alone. Please join us as we work together to create equity, shape and change our community and our country's course.

The Worcester Together Coalition as signed by:

Action! by Design  
Alex M. Mooradian, Esq.  
Ascentria Care Alliance

Mission E4  
Michael Sleeper, Imperial Distributors  
Naomi Sleeper, Imperial Distributors

Billy Fitzpatrick, College of the Holy Cross, 2020  
Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor  
Boys & Girls Club of Worcester  
Central Mass Housing Alliance  
CENTRO  
Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester  
Coghlin Electrical Contractors, Inc.  
Coghlin Network Services, Inc.  
Community Health Link  
Congressman Jim McGovern  
Department of Children and Families, Worcester East  
Department of Youth Service, Central Region  
Dress for Success Worcester  
Ed Augustus, City Manager, Worcester  
Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center  
Edward Street Child Services  
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Face Mask Working Group - Mutual Aid Worcester  
Friendly House  
Gina Plata-Nino, Esq.  
Greater Worcester Community Foundation  
Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester  
HOPE Coalition  
Imperial Distributors  
Jeremiah's Inn  
Joe Ertle, College of the Holy Cross  
Kimberly Salmon, Worcester Resident  
Latino Education Institute  
Legendary Legacies Inc  
Living In Freedom Together-LIFT  
Love Your Labels  
Main South Community Development Corporation  
Mark Richman, Professor, WPI  
MassHIRE, Worcester and Southbridge Career Centers  
Mayor Joseph M. Petty

National Grid  
Open Sky Community Services  
Organization for Nonprofit Excellence (ONE Worcester)  
Pernet Family Health Service  
Project New Hope Inc.  
Quinsigamond Community College  
Regional Environmental Council of Central MA  
Senator Ed Markey  
Senator Harriette L. Chandler  
Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates  
Southeast Asian Coalition  
State Representative James O'Day  
State Representative John J. Mahoney  
Straight Ahead Ministries  
The Clemente Course in the Humanities, Worcester  
The Guild of St. Agnes  
The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts  
Journey Community Church, Revs. Tom Sparling, Paul Joyal, Lou Soiles  
Together for Kids Coalition  
UMass Memorial Health Care  
United Way of Central Massachusetts  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
Worcester Chamber Music Society/Neighborhood Strings  
Worcester Community Action Council  
Worcester Community Connections of YOU, Inc.  
Worcester Cultural Coalition  
Worcester Education Collaborative  
Worcester Family Partnership  
Worcester Housing Authority  
Worcester Interfaith  
Worcester Public Schools  
Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Worcester State University  
Worcester Telegram and Gazette  
YMCA of Central Massachusetts  
YWCA Central Massachusetts