



Working for transparency with respect to the Sheriff's Department.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2020

Civilian Oversight Commission Statement to the People of L.A. County on the Killing of George Floyd and the Civil Unrest

Los Angeles, CA – George Floyd didn't deserve to die. His murder by a law enforcement officer in full view of the public is a horrific reminder of how this nation has collectively failed Black people and other people of color time and time again. With COVID-19 disproportionately affecting Black and Latino communities, George Floyd's killing underscores how far we have not come. While we are angered and mourn the death of George Floyd, we also remember the countless other men and women who have died and suffered because of an unjust system including the many lives lost in Los Angeles County who have been killed because of illegal acts by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Black Lives do matter; we recognize and embrace this. To those who are hurting, we hear you; we, too, are hurting. To those who are grieving, we are grieving with you. To those who are taking advantage of this pain and anguish, we condemn your actions and ask that you see the negative impact your actions are having on a cause that is worthy and just. It has been 30 years since Rodney King. Little has changed.

The Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission was developed out of the recognition that there must be civilian, i.e. community, oversight of law enforcement. Our job is to increase the transparency and accountability of the Sheriff's department and to make sure that it becomes a trustworthy institution. Our purpose and charge is critical. But this is not enough. There are fundamental flaws in the entire criminal justice system, and in our society as a whole, that must be addressed: from laws and law enforcement, to prosecution and the courts, to jails and prisons. Reforms, system change, and transformation must happen. A fundamental shift in the way in which we view one another must take place for this to occur. Inequality in all its forms (social, economic, judicial) must be eliminated.

We must not let our past failures prevent us from future success in creating a just society for all. The legacy of racism that underlies the inequity of the criminal justice system must be eliminated. Too many lives have been lost for us not to act. Too much is at stake.

As a Commission, we resolve to be solution focused. We recommit to hold the Sheriff's Department accountable for uses of force and being responsive to the communities it serves. We will celebrate their successes and hold them accountable when they miss the mark. We will perform our oversight

functions preferably with cooperation and collaboration but if not, we will fulfill our mandate of oversight. We hope that the leadership at Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department will join in this mission and work with us. We, too, must be held accountable.

We commit to join with community, educational, and other reform minded organizations to propose and enact real changes within the criminal justice system. This must be a sustained effort and we are committed to seeing this through. We invite the wide and diverse Los Angeles Community to engage with us.

Our communities are hurting - the pain and grief is real. We must not let the civil unrest of this moment override the righteous arc toward justice. We cannot move forward until we, as a nation, seriously address these endemic and existential issues. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to Justice everywhere." He also said that "Riots are the language of the unheard." We hear you and commit to listen even more deeply and to act judiciously.



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County of Los Angeles, Civilian Oversight Commission

Working to boost transparency and increase trust between communities and the LA County Sheriff's Department, the Commission aims to provide robust opportunities for community engagement, ongoing analysis and oversight of the department's policies, practices, procedures, and advice to the Board of Supervisors, the Sheriff's Department and the public.

Civilian Oversight Commissioners include Chair Patti Giggans, Vice Chair Priscilla Ocen, Robert C. Bonner; J.P. Harris; Sean Kennedy; Lael Rubin, Xavier Thompson, Casimiro U. Tolentino and Hernán Vera.

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