

**For Immediate Release**

June 3, 2020

## **JOINT STATEMENT FROM FEDERAL DEFENDERS ON THE KILLING OF GEORGE FLOYD**

The moral arc of the universe, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, bends towards justice. And yet, we all saw that arc snap again under a police officer's white knee on George Floyd's Black neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds. That knee has been placed on too many Black necks before and too often without repercussions.

This time must be different. While we can kneel in solidarity with Mr. Floyd, we also must stand up and demand that racism, overt and implicit, be acknowledged and confronted.

As federal public and community defenders, we represent the overwhelming majority of those charged with crimes in federal court, most of whom are minorities, of all colors and orientations. We have witnessed "wars" on drugs and crime become dog whistles for hate and racism. Intentions to make communities safe are hijacked by other insidious agendas. The war on crime is a new Jim Crow that permeates our criminal justice system. Daily, we see charges that are too harsh, sentences that are too long, and a system that turns a blind eye to oppressive structural racism because it seems to fear "too much justice."

George Floyd died face down, gasping and begging to breathe. It is well beyond time for us all to say, "Enough."

We are better than this; we can be just and empathetic. We can do what is right and what is moral. We can keep communities safe by holding out our hand to help, aware of our own failings and biases.

And in this crucible of anger, we take a breath, and begin to repair the moral arc and bend it back towards justice.

As federal defenders, we stand with many like George Floyd who have been held down and denied their humanity. It is our job, our calling. It is our privilege. For George Floyd and all of our clients, we renew our longstanding commitment to fight daily for equal justice.

**Christine Freeman**  
Executive Director  
Middle District of Alabama

**Carlos Williams**  
Executive Director  
Southern District of Alabama

**Jon M. Sands**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Arizona

**Bruce Eddy**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Arkansas

**Heather E. Williams**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of California

**Kathryn Nester**  
Executive Director  
Southern District of California

**Terence S. Ward**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Connecticut

**A.J. Kramer**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Columbia

**Michael Caruso**  
Federal Public Defender  
Southern District of Florida

**Stephanie Kearns**  
Executive Director  
Northern District of Georgia

**Peter Wolff**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Hawaii

**Thomas W. Patton**  
Federal Public Defender  
Central District of Illinois

**Stephen R. Welby**  
Federal Public Defender  
Southern District of Illinois

**Monica Foster**  
Executive Director  
Southern District of Indiana

**Melody Brannon**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Kansas

**Claude Kelly**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of Louisiana

**Kevin Butler**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of Alabama

**Jamie McGrady**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Alaska

**Lisa Peters**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of Arkansas

**Amy Karlin**  
Interim Federal Public Defender  
Central District of California

**Steven G. Kalar**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of California

**Virginia Grady**  
Federal Public Defender  
Districts of Colorado & Wyoming

**Edson Bostic**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Delaware

**Randolph P. Murrell**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of Florida

**Christina Hunt**  
Executive Director  
Middle District of Georgia

**John Gorman**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Guam

**Samuel Richard Rubin**  
Executive Director  
District of Idaho

**John Murphy**  
Executive Director  
Northern District of Illinois

**Brad Hansen**  
Acting Federal Public Defender  
Districts of Northern & Southern Iowa

**Scott Wendelsdorf**  
Executive Director  
Western District of Kentucky

**Rebecca Hudsmith**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Louisiana

**James Wyda**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Maryland

**David Beneman**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Maine

**Katherian Roe**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Minnesota

**Lee Lawless**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of Missouri

**Omodare Jupiter**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern & Southern Districts of Mississippi

**Madeline Cardarella**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Missouri

**David Stickman**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Nebraska

**Richard Coughlin**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of New Jersey

**Lisa Bellew-Peebles**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of New York

**Marianne Mariano**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of New York

**Louis Allen**  
Federal Public Defender  
Middle District of North Carolina

**Anthony Martinez**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of North Carolina

**Deborah Williams**  
Federal Public Defender  
Southern District of Ohio

**Susan Otto**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Oklahoma

**Leigh Skipper**  
Executive Director  
Eastern District of Pennsylvania

**Parks Small**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of South Carolina

**Miriam Conrad**  
Federal Public Defender Districts of  
Massachusetts, New Hampshire & Rhode Island

**Sharon Turek**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Michigan

**Anthony Gallagher**  
Executive Director  
District of Montana

**Rene L. Valladares**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Nevada

**Stephen P. McCue**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of New Mexico

**David Patton**  
Executive Director  
Southern & Eastern Districts of New York

**G. Alan DuBois**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of North Carolina

**Stephen C. Newman**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of Ohio

**Julia L. O'Connell**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of Oklahoma

**Lisa Hay**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Oregon

**Heidi Freese**  
Federal Public Defender  
Middle District of Pennsylvania

**Eric Vos**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Puerto Rico

**Lisa Freeland**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Pennsylvania

**Elizabeth Ford**  
Executive Director  
Eastern District of Tennessee

**Doris Randle-Holt**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Tennessee

**Jason Tupman**  
Federal Public Defender  
Districts of North & South Dakota

**Henry Martin**  
Federal Public Defender  
Middle District of Tennessee

**G. Patrick Black**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of Texas

**Marjorie A. Meyers**  
Federal Public Defender  
Southern District of Texas

**Scott Wilson**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Utah

**Matthew Campbell**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Virgin Islands

**Juval Scott**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Virginia

**Michael Filipovic**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Washington

**Jason Hawkins**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of Texas

**Maureen Franco**  
Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Texas

**Michael L. Desautels**  
Federal Public Defender  
District of Vermont

**Jeremy Kamens**  
Federal Public Defender  
Eastern District of Virginia

**Andrea K. George**  
Executive Director  
Eastern District of Washington

**Brian J. Kornbrath**  
Federal Public Defender  
Northern District of West Virginia

**Craig Albee**  
Executive Director  
Eastern District of Wisconsin