

Legal Rights Center, Inc.

A LAW FIRM OF AND FOR THE PEOPLE

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Statement of the Board of Directors* May 29, 2020

The Legal Rights Center condemns the killing of George Floyd and demands justice

On May 25, 2020, four Minneapolis Police Officers, responding to an allegation of a non-violent forgery, callously, and in gross violation of their oaths, forcibly took the life of Minneapolis resident George Floyd in plain view of many terrified citizens.

Please man, I can't breathe.

The circumstances which led to Mr. Floyd's death were the opposite of civilized policing. The officers' badges, at the time of the incident and seemingly at present, have only acted to shield them from the consequences which any other person under the circumstances would most certainly have faced: immediate arrest. The gratuitous use by the police of excessive force in causing the needless deaths of other black men in our community remain all too fresh in the collective memories of communities of color. It is difficult to process the officers' blatant and extended indifference to the life of a person they were sworn to protect.

Fifty years ago, the Legal Rights Center was born from movements in African American and American Indian communities that shared the common experience of police violence along with racial and culturally based oppression – and sought its own tool for advancing justice. Soon after, we were joined by the growing immigrant communities who experienced much of the same. While oppression takes many forms, all our communities deeply feel the weight of the disregard for our individual humanity that so often pervades our systems, impacts our daily lives in vastly disproportionate ways, creates harmful inequity for our children, and forces communities of color to be unduly vigilant about physical risks on a daily basis – including the very real risk of unnecessary death by police.

The LRC stands with many in our community in their demand for justice on Mr. Floyd's behalf. We appreciate the arrest of Officer Chauvin, and call on Chief Arradondo and County Attorney Freeman to arrest the remaining three officers responsible for Mr. Floyd's death and that they be criminally charged for their actions. Our city is burning. The current anxiety being felt, and the disorder we are experiencing, can only begin to subside once the four officers are in custody and brought to justice to answer for their actions. The longer the county attorney waits only increases the likelihood of more damage to our psyche, businesses, cities, and common bonds.

Justice requires accountability and transparency from the Minneapolis Police Department and the City of Minneapolis regarding the grievous acts of their own. The LRC will continue its efforts to seek widespread change in the criminal justice system, one which emphasizes the full capabilities and self-empowerment of the African-American, American Indian, and immigrant communities.

* LRC Board Director, Judge Michael J. Davis, removed himself from all processes relating to the development and ratification of this statement.