



Statement on the Death of George Floyd

June 4, 2020

The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) is stunned and saddened by the circumstances surrounding the death of George Floyd. We strongly condemn the actions of the officers involved and call for all pretrial, probation, and parole agencies to join us in stating that this type of behavior is reprehensible and must never, ever be repeated.

Like most of the country, we are angered and dismayed but also conflicted. As part of the criminal justice system, we stand by and support our law enforcement partners. The vast majority of police officers and other justice professionals are honorable, dedicated, and courageous public servants who willingly put themselves in harm's way to protect our communities. Yet it was uniformed officers whose actions led to George Floyd's tragic death—and even if they are regarded as a few bad actors, it must be recognized that this case was not a singular occurrence. Indeed, it appears that such cases are far from uncommon. Regarded collectively, they undermine the public's confidence in our criminal justice system, negating much of the great work being done on a daily basis.

The shockwave emanating from Minneapolis has spread worldwide. Peaceful protests by those who seek change is a hallmark of our democracy. We stand behind those who are exercising their constitutional right to march in peace. We also understand their frustration and anger, but strongly denounce violent opportunists whose actions only exacerbate an already volatile situation.

“Let's continue to foster transformation and policy changes that will lead to a community corrections system that is more equitable and just and that treats all individuals with empathy and respect.”

APPA and its members are a force for positive change. Our community supervision agencies work tirelessly to that end. Nonetheless, even as we strive to improve lives and build communities, we know that we are not perfect or blameless. Like our law enforcement brethren, we are a component of a flawed justice system that still reflects historical societal biases. No matter the background or criminal record of George Floyd, that event was dreadful, and we hope it gives us pause and inspires us to seriously ponder how our field can be transformed to eliminate inequities that have been built into our institutions for far too long.

This is a time to remember what we stand for. APPA supports criminal justice reform in general, but primarily we look inward. We must be an active part of the solutions. Let's continue to foster transformation and policy changes that will lead to a community corrections system that is more equitable and just and that treats all individuals with empathy and respect.

We owe this to the individuals under our charge, and we owe this to our fellow Americans.

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