



Educating, advocating, ensuring access to justice.

PIRC Statement on the Killing of George Floyd

June 9, 2020

Like so many across the United States and around the world, PIRC staff was horrified to witness the murder of George Floyd. Racism, both overt and implicit, is deeply rooted in the United States and has been a major barrier to achieving a just society for all, including immigrants.

PIRC applauds the coast to coast outcry from individuals and institutions regarding Mr. Floyd's senseless death. The United States was founded on the principles of justice and equality for all persons as set-forth in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, but from the beginning these principles were not universally applied, requiring subsequent Amendments, struggle, and change. That work continues today. Heinous injustices forced upon the African-American community and other people of color have been recurring for far too many years.

PIRC staff and board members urge that the murder of George Floyd be the catalyst to trigger substantive policing and systemic change in our communities. A civil society cannot exist until all persons are afforded equal access to justice under the law. A two-tiered system of justice can no longer be permitted to divide our communities and nation.

As we move out of the COVID-19 seclusion, PIRC leadership and staff encourages all persons to be actively engaged in their local communities to spur the dialogue and action needed to foster substantive societal change. PIRC was founded 24 years ago by a few local citizens who sought justice for the survivors of the shipwrecked Golden Venture. The group remained committed to the cause for years until all the asylum seekers were released from the York County Prison.

Today, let's join together again to address the racial injustices and policing abuses that plague our communities. Too many times throughout our history, the citizenry has let an opportunity for change fade away unfulfilled. Let's take this opportunity and rise above all the hate and dissension and bring substantive change to our police forces, communities, and nation. It is time for local communities to take a courageous stand and acknowledge that a two-tiered system of justice must no longer be accepted. This is not an impossible goal: love can overcome hate. It must be achieved, not with mere sentimentality, but with hard work including listening, introspection, imagination, and action.

PIRC is here to provide support for all communities. Our programs work to provide access to justice for all vulnerable immigrants in detention, immigrant survivors of violence, and lawful permanent residents seeking to naturalize, through legal service, education, and advocacy. Join us in the larger work of ensuring access to justice for all.

Sincerely,

PIRC Staff and Board

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