



PINELLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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KENNETH T. WELCH
COMMISSIONER

June 2, 2020

Re: George Floyd murder and protests

As Black elected officials representing the citizens of Pinellas county, we express our collective outrage at the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, and join the call for justice for Mr. Floyd, and accountability for all officers involved in this heinous act.

We strongly support peaceful protests. Rioting and looting, however, is dangerous and dilutes the message of justice for Mr. Floyd. This destructive behavior appears to be fomented by a small group of agitators – some from outside our community – and it cannot be allowed to continue.

Here in Pinellas County and the City of St. Petersburg, local law enforcement leaders have rightfully denounced the conduct of the Minneapolis officers involved in Mr. Floyd's death, and pledged that our local law enforcement standards of conduct expressly ban the use of such tactics. No law enforcement agency is perfect; however, we value the progress that has been made, and the ongoing partnership with our local law enforcement agencies. We will continue to demand community-focused policing and high standards of professionalism from our law enforcement agencies.

Moving our community forward also requires high standards from our community. Many issues impact our community currently, from the impacts of poverty, to the economic and health impacts of COVID19, to the deadly trends of auto-theft and "toe-tagging", lives are being lost and impacted in our community. We look forward to continuing our collective work for a safer, more equitable and prosperous community for all.

State Senator Darryl Rouson
State Representative Wengay "Newt" Newton
Pinellas County Commissioner Kenneth T. Welch
Pinellas County School Board Member Rene Flowers
St. Petersburg Council Member Lisa Wheeler Bowman
St. Petersburg Council Member Deborah Figgs-Sanders