

In Response To The Derek Chauvin Verdict

Ward For Select Board Campaign

Today, there is a sigh of relief; a collective breath of Black community members to be exhaled in exhausted jubilation that on this day, we witnessed justice. That accountability for unjust policing finally was dealt with by a system that, for far too long, would look the other way from abhorrent acts by law enforcement.

Now is the time for new steps to be forged and a new conversation to be had about what policing, restorative justice, and criminality all mean in this country. For actions to be changed, for the value of human life to be restored, and for collaborative efforts to be enacted so that two communities, BIPOC and Police, can come closer together and not farther apart.

It is time for things to change. It has been time since day one. Today, we see a cornerstone of honest, true, and swift change. There is now a precedent for things to come. This will not solve everything; no singular verdict can ever do that. However, verdict after verdict, and accountable action after accountable action, can now be built upon to send this generation, and ones after it, to a greater future.

As a BIPOC member myself, I have been delivered hope, as much of the BIPOC community has, at a time when we were unhopeful for what the future of our lives were going to be. From the amount of death we have seen; of unarmed black men and women, of unchallenged actions by law enforcement, of misunderstood and misappropriated use of force, violence, and hate, we were unsure we could make it much longer. Today we can possibly envision a better and brighter future, and solid foundation, and a chance to trust in justice once again.

We see an opportunity for Law Enforcement and BIPOC community members to seize this moment, and forge a better relationship; to talk, hear, listen, and respect what this means for both communities. As this trial was not the trial of all Police, of all white individuals, nor of the collective judicial system, this verdict is not the condemnation of all Police, white individuals, or the collective judicial system. It is a simple step, towards better policing, greater awareness of black life, and of more concrete changes for judicial reform to keep holding those who overstep the law, policy, and training, leading to the death of black and brown people.

The time for change is now, and we are here to continue in moving this change. This was not the end. It is the beginning. May we be ready for what else is to come.

With renewed hope,

Dustin Ward
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Ward For Select Board