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FLOYD DENSE

ALTON STERLING

PHILANDRO CASTILLE

BOTHAN JEAN

ATATIANA JEFFERSON

AHMAUD AUBREY

SEAN REED

BREONNA TAYLOR

GEORGE FLOYD

OUR CHARGE

From Noose to Knee – I cannot breath...Hands up

As I briefly speak with you, you will hear excerpts from The Negro National Anthem, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Langston Hughes.

We feel injustice has transitioned from a noose to a knee.

We are here acknowledging the deaths of the names just called and granted those were only a few. Whenever pain is inflicted or the body is cut, we hurt and we bleed. We are bleeding for justice. We are present to represent people that are tired, rightly, we are frustrated with failed policies and practices in systems we encounter daily, we are angry and grieved, we are heartbroken and honestly we are exhausted with the systemic problems of injustice and disparities harming our communities. We hear and see our family being senselessly killed, and lack of consequences of not confronting long-standing problems, law enforcement bias, and the false myth that we, people of color are dangerous or guilty until proven innocent.

We don't have to be violent to protest, to have our voices heard, but we must be focused, we must be effective and we must be purposeful.

We must evaluate ourselves. What is fueling the momentum we have right now? Is it anger, frustration, hurt or injustice?

I appeal to you, the energy we have now is what must fuel us. But, it cannot be fueled with OUR anger and frustration because that turns into rage.

We must stay fueled with purpose. We must stay fueled to be heard. When we are heard, we can bring about change. We cannot become weary. Look at those standing next to you, this problem is not Black, Brown or White problem. Neither can this be fixed if we feel it is not our problem. It is moral problem of right and wrong! Dr. King stated, "Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." We cannot generalize and put everyone in the same category.

We cannot paint law enforcement officers with one broad stroke, as we cannot and do not appreciate being categorized with those whose behaviors do not represent us.

We cannot go back to where we were prior to May 25, 2020, neither would we choose to go back.

Reduce violence against unarmed Black and Brown Men and Women

We must demand and expect better for ourselves and our children

Who are we?

We are:

Tenacious

Resilient

We are no longer tolerating what we once tolerated

We are courageous, we are fueled with determination, inspiration and hope

We are raising awareness

We need to stay informed

We agree time for change is way overdue

We want justice, not only from the lives taken from us, but for our children.

We must acknowledge the culture we live in and change the culture.

We can do that with peaceful protesting, putting ourselves in the position to have a voice and change policies and

Know, the world is forever changed by who we are!

Langston Hughes wrote,

I had only hope then, but now through you,
Dark ones of today, my dreams must come true:

All you dark children in the world out there,
Remember my sweat, my pain, my despair.
Remember my years, heavy with sorrow -
And make of those years a torch for tomorrow.
Make of my pass a road to the light
Out of the darkness, the ignorance, the night.
Lift high my banner out of the dust.
Stand like free men supporting my trust.
Believe in the right, let none push you back.

We must respond as one voice in CommonUnity.

Our children are watching us, their future depends on our actions today and as we move forward.

I pray for us, our courage, strength our peace and direction

Marching progress forward and not forget what drives us push forward, our work is not done until we feel victory is won, until we can boldly stand and say Liberty & Justice for ALL.

We must vote and we need to vote on every level.

We are the difference we need!