



Dear Friends,

As an organization dedicated to civil rights, we are angered and heartbroken by the continued killing of unarmed Black men and women, including George Floyd in Minneapolis, Breonna Taylor in Louisville, and Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia.

We stand with those calling for justice and the end of violence against Black communities. We fight for housing justice and call out the systemic injustice that has racially segregated our communities and perpetuated social, economic, and environmental inequities embedded in our society. We seek to break barriers through education and advocacy, and fight in the courts for fair housing rights.

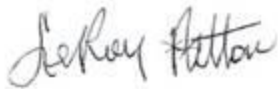
Similar to many parts of Oregon, [Minneapolis has a history of using racially restrictive covenants](#) – legal agreements in property deeds that restricted the purchase, lease, or occupation of property, intended to keep neighborhoods exclusively white. This injustice has contributed to the violence we see against Black communities not only in Minneapolis, but around the country and locally here in Oregon. These and other forces, governmental and private, legal and illegal, have created the systemic racism we live with in our communities.

The protests around the country this past week are reminiscent of the riots that broke out in 125 cities across America in 1968 following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. [The call for justice was met with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 – the Fair Housing Act.](#) This is the legislation that makes it illegal to discriminate in housing based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, and disability. This is the core of our mission - to end housing discrimination and ensure equal access to housing for all Oregonians.

Even during a worldwide pandemic, systemic racism and white supremacy do not rest - we have seen COVID-19 disproportionately impact the Black community. We call on all in our community to see the full humanity in our fellow citizens, regardless of skin color. Even when the headlines fade away, we must recognize injustices occur on a daily basis to many members of our community and require our attention and dedication to resolve.

Please join us in calling for justice and in sending out peace to the family, friends, and community members impacted by these tragic acts.

In solidarity, on behalf of the FHCO board and staff,



LeRoy Patton, Board President



Allan Lazo, Executive Director

This is a vital time to amplify the voices of front line communities whose work is rooted in ending injustice. Following are just two powerful statements from critical local organizations:

We Can't Breathe – An Open Letter to Community (Coalition of Communities of Color): <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/ccc-news/5-29-openletter>

Police Accountability and the Fight for Black Lives (Urban League of Portland): <https://ulpdx.org/news/2020/6/police-accountability-and-fight->

[black-lives](#)

This message also expands on a [Facebook post last week](#) by our executive director, Allan Lazo.