



Dear Members of the Las Vegas Chapter of the National Bar Association,

For many of us, the year began full of promise. Something about the year 2020 inspired a hope for something bigger and greater. However, 2020 has brought many challenges. The pandemic forced us to respond to life in new and unimaginable ways. Forced inward, and without distractions, we paid attention to things we may otherwise have ignored. Our collective focus is now on the issues of racism rooted in our democracy.

Like most of you, I have been struggling with the death of George Floyd. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota by a police officer for allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill. His murder resulted in a global movement to end systemic racism and the brutalization of black and brown communities by the very people who are supposed to protect and serve. On May 31, 2020, we came together as one LVNBA family to “Breathe” via a vigil honoring the life of George Floyd. Since then, I have been wondering:

- Where do we go next as a society?
- What is the LVNBA's role moving forward?
- How can we sustain interest in change?

I believe the answers to each of these questions can be carved from the concept of unity. As lawyers and professionals in the legal arena, we must work together within our larger community to destroy and dismantle systems of oppression. We must uphold justice and overthrow laws that on their face, or in effect, discriminate against black and brown communities. We must combat systemic racism from the government to corporate America, housing, banking, Silicon Valley, and everywhere in between. These are long term goals that we can focus on to achieve a true democracy for ourselves and for our children. In the short term, here are some things you can do to get involved:

PARTICIPATE

- Join the NBA Police Misconduct and Justice Taskforce:
https://www.nationalbar.org/NBA/NBA_Police_Misconduct_and_Justice_Taskforce.aspx?WebsiteKey=0131bda0-b8d6-42ea-88ce-2447f3c18193

EDUCATE

- Article by Bryan Stevenson on the Frustration behind the Protests:
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/bryan-stevenson-on-the-frustration-behind-the-george-floyd-protests>



- Reports on Police Reporting and Police Practices in Nevada by the Nevada Civil Rights Commission: <https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/docs/NV-SAC--Police-Milreport--OSD.pdf> and <https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2019/09-18-NV-Policing-Practices.pdf>
- Resources to become anti-racist and check your own biases and privileges: https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/1BRIF2_zhNe86SGgHa6-VIBO-QgirlTwCTugSfKie5Fs/mobilebasic?fbclid=IwAR13dKUT1AXH-2cwl9JBT_7PKxcJH-NylXfBMsZxMTXpLQrQgR3VM99a7D0

DONATE

- Donate whatever you can to bail funds across the country to help get protestors out of jail: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_OjxEKTEh0su8ZJ-mXiJ5w39J1RBpAjaJ7KyCgk-CiM/edit?fbclid=IwAR14EigjsohxvAzerS8VjTxyNgDLMlnLqDMYCqp2LCySnvNmRPbASVUcN0&emci=437dbaeb-26a1-ea11-86e9-00155d03b5dd&emdi=9daeb89e-36a4-ea11-9b05-00155d03b5dd&ceid=6102552
- Support Black-owned businesses: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CA8y0Aupmlw/?igshid=1msorxuq2snf>

ATTEND

- Peaceful protests around the country and become a legal observer
- Community forums on racial justice
- Breathe II: Foreword, hosted by the LVNBA and Assemblywoman Dina Neal on June 27, 2020 at 2pm, where we will discuss more action-oriented items on how we move forward as a community

As we take action, let us also pause to mourn George Floyd and the many other victims. Let us honor them by remembering that we cannot stay silent, we cannot be content with the way things have always been, and we cannot sit idly by, waiting for someone else to fix it. Rather, we must take action, be strong, be resilient, and be the change we wish to see.

Yours truly,


Augusta A. Massey, Esq.

President of the Las Vegas Chapter of the National Bar Association