

Rep. Allen: Statement on the death of George Floyd

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The death of George Floyd was outrageous. Kneeling on a person's neck while handcuffed is wrong. Officers are trained in the dangers of mechanical compression and restricting airways. Once suspects are handcuffed and under control, they are supposed to be placed in a recovery position. Officer Chauvin's actions demonstrated nothing short of a depraved mind.

As a society we have failed to empower leaders to stand up to racism and hate. Officer Chauvin should have been stopped by the other officers on the scene. Justice should be served, and the people who abused their power, the kneeler and the other police officers present, should be punished severely for their crime and breach of public trust.

While we often do not have control over events that happen, we can control our responses to them. I am dismayed with the violence, theft, and property damage that has erupted, effectively concealing the peaceful protests. Violence of any kind has no place in our civil society, and it should be punished according to the crime.

Those who participated in peaceful protests are to be commended for their concern and commitment to improve our society. Also worthy of commendation are the many law enforcement officers who protect and serve us with professionalism and dignity.

We are learning that individuals and organizations may have intentionally hijacked the cause of "black lives matter" with what can accurately be described as terrorist actions. Are they intentionally preying on our vulnerabilities to further divide us?

We choose how we respond.

If we are to rise above hate, we must seek to understand each other, our fears, our desires, our challenges and our expectations. We must seek third alternatives, not compromise, but synergistic solutions that are better than what we can come up with on our own. We must talk with one another.

Are we willing to do that work? Are you willing to do that work with me?