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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Eric Hoffman, Prosecuting Attorney
Date: June 3, 2020 10:30 p.m.

**PROSECUTOR HOFFMAN'S PREPARED REMARKS FROM TONIGHT'S
COMMUNITY FORUM ¹**

Good evening. Thank you for the invitation to be a part of tonight's forum. It is an honor and a privilege to be here. Thank you Paris for inviting me. I want to share my thoughts on the law and the notion of justice in our criminal justice system.

The greatness of our nation comes from our commitment to the rule of law. As the Prosecuting Attorney, I am the chief law enforcement officer of the county. I enforce the laws of the State of Indiana in a multitude of ways. I have to ensure that law and order are maintained and most importantly to seek justice on behalf of victims of crime.

The benchmark of a civilized society is the quality of its justice. Dr. Martin Luther King once said that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." It is how society responds to that threat of injustice that will determine whether the rule of law will endure. Society must respond to injustice peacefully – and let things play out in the court system – according to the law and our system of justice

What happened to George Floyd is not only an injustice but it is a crime. A crime of violence. There is no known police technique that justifies this officer holding his knee on the throat of Mr. Floyd and ignoring the distress calls from him indicating that he could not breathe. As the Prosecutor of this county, I will not tolerate such a blatant disregard for human life. I can tell you that such actions would be prosecuted here. I will not tolerate racism in any form.

When I became a prosecutor I took an oath to support and defend the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Indiana and I constantly remind myself that justice needs to be applied fairly, across the board, without fear or favor and never based on anyone's race.

¹ This is not a verbatim transcript. Prosecutor Hoffman had to shorten his prepared remarks due to time constraints placed on the speakers.

Justice must be the same for all people – across the board. As our Declaration of Independence says: “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. That among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

This reminds me of lady justice who holds the scales of justice. She is blindfolded which represents that justice is supposed to be blind to a person’s color, race, or creed. Justice is rendered solely based on the evidence and the law – And not on any other factors such as the race, creed, political, economic, or social status of the litigants. No one is above the law.

My office seeks justice with that blindfold on which is crucial. Every day we strive to seek justice for all victims of crime, based on the evidence and the law, regardless of who the victim or the perpetrator is. That is something I have always done and will continue to do. When there is evidence of a crime - we hold people accountable for their actions. As our pledge of allegiance concludes “one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and **justice for all.**”

I am a big supporter of our First Amendment. Over the past several days I have been watching the news coverage of the protests across the country. I am very proud of my fellow citizens of Muncie for expressing their beliefs and thoughts in a peaceful way. I am proud to call Muncie my home. I look at the violence around the country and it is deeply saddening. Violence begets violence. And I am so thankful that all of Muncie’s protests and marches have been peaceful and without violence. I think that is a testament to the people of our community.

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The Community Form was held June 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. at the Muncie Mall.

Other speakers included:

Muncie Mayor Dan Ridenour
Muncie Community Schools CEO Dr. Kwiatkowski
Delaware County Sheriff Tony Skinner
Muncie Chief of Police Nathan Sloan
Yorktown Chief of Police Todd St. John
Ball State Chief of Police James Duckham
Reverend Robert Scaife
Pastor Andre Mitchell
Watasha Barnes Griffin