

Supreme Court of Colorado

2 East 14th Avenue
Denver, CO 80203
(720) 626-5460

June 11, 2020

To the Judicial Officers and Employees of the Judicial Branch:

We feel it is important to reach out to you in light of the wrenching events of the past two weeks. We have been starkly reminded that confidence in our system of justice is fragile and not universal – and cannot be taken for granted. In the face of this reminder, we must move forward together in service of our mutual commitment to justice – a commitment that is emblazoned on the cornice of the Ralph Carr Judicial Center, which proclaims “Liberty and Justice for All,” and that is echoed on the entry wall of the building, which greets the public with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s admonition, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Dr. King’s words remind us of our mission as judicial branch employees to provide our community with a fair and impartial system of justice, and also of our need to hear the voices of those who feel that the ideals of equal justice have eluded them. We know the events that have unfolded across our nation in recent weeks have been painful to many. We’ve heard from our Black colleagues and coworkers that it’s been especially difficult for them. By redoubling our efforts to ensure that our decisions are free of bias, we can help build a more universal faith in our courts and our system of justice. By continuing our work to diversify our bench, we can help to ensure that our courts reflect the communities we serve. And by collaborating with community organizations, we allow ourselves to see the world through the eyes of those who have felt ignored or marginalized. Collaboration, founded on a commitment to our common ideals and deep mutual respect, breeds hope.

Dr. King’s famous line about injustice continued: “We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” These words remind us that we share collective responsibility for securing liberty and justice for all. The rule of law on which our nation is founded is sustained only by society’s collective belief in it and by our

collective responsibility as judges and members of the judicial branch to uphold it. Our judicial canons obligate all judicial officers to promote public confidence in our legal system. But it is only through our combined efforts that we can ensure this confidence moving forward.

These are painful times, but such times can bring us together and inspire us to reflect upon and address the significant issues with which our society is grappling— issues that we too often set aside for another day. Now more than ever, it is vital for us to be mindful of our unwavering commitment to equal justice under law.

We urge all members of the branch to engage respectfully and productively in the difficult dialogue that we must have to address the issues confronting our Black community and thus our community as a whole. It is only through this kind of open discussion and fellowship that we can truly make progress toward the ideals of liberty and justice for all. We thank you for the work that you do, and we encourage you to join us as we rededicate ourselves to our mission of providing fair and impartial justice to all.

With deep respect,

The Justices of the Colorado Supreme Court