



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Statement from the Board

In the weeks since George Floyd lost his life, communities across the nation are coming together in protest to give voice to the centuries of inequality, exploitation and abuse suffered by Black and African American people in our country. The demands for change cannot go unanswered.

Our history of systemic oppression disproportionately impacts Black and African Americans due to the forced migration and enslavement of African peoples hundreds of years ago. We recognize the intersectionality of races, ethnicities and cultures and that people of color—Black/African American, Middle Eastern, Native American, Hispanic/Latinx and Asian/Pacific Islander—experience inequality, discrimination and prejudice as a daily occurrence.

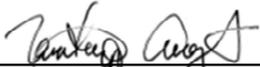
To create meaningful change, we must understand the racist history that Oregon and Benton County have experienced and the structural systems - including government—that reinforce racism locally, statewide and nationally. We must commit to challenge and deconstruct these systems.

Systemic racism silences vulnerable communities, overwhelmingly benefits the privileged, and enables those in power to abuse their power at the expense of the marginalized and vulnerable. It exists beyond policing within communities of color. It is often exhibited through gerrymandering, voter suppression, redlining, and other societal structures. All systems that reinforce oppression and racism must be thoroughly examined, changed where needed and rebuilt in coordination with the people that have been historically disenfranchised. This work needs to happen at every level within our County, as well as in concert with our state and federal partners.

The Benton County Board of Commissioners is dedicated to examining racism within Benton County and we are committed to listening to the needs of the communities that we serve. We have and will continue to have these conversations with our law enforcement partners and our elected legislators. Today we stand in solidarity with our Black community. We affirm that Black lives matter today, yesterday and forever.

Sincerely,


Pat Malone


Xanthippe Augerot


Annabelle Jaramillo