



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Media Contact:

Kasey Sirody
(805) 639-9218

VCDSA RESPONDS TO RECENT EVENTS

VENTURA, CA – What occurred in Minneapolis was deeply troubling, and, along with the rest of the world, we found it difficult to watch. We condemn police brutality and will not tolerate racism. Today we are here to tell you we stand with those who seek change so that **every person of color is treated with dignity and respect**. In order to truly have “liberty and justice for all” we must work together to eliminate racism and all forms of discrimination from our society. We also hurt and have feelings of anger, frustration, and disgust that the actions of a few impact the work of so many dedicated and hardworking peace officers in this Country.

This week we heard chants from some regarding all the “Racist Cops” and saw signs proclaiming, “All Cops are Bastards.” For years we have worked to connect with our communities and listened to their concerns. We have strived to demonstrate that law enforcement officers are human beings with families who deeply care about their communities. Now we find ourselves painted by some with a broad brush that makes it appear there is a face of hate on every peace officer. We are heartsick because we join the world in wanting a better place to live for everyone. We recognize the way to accomplish this goal is through unity and solidarity. We must come together as a community; we must listen, we must learn, and we must grow together. At VCDSA, we find racial discrimination abhorrent and we hope you will work with us to ensure that the practices and policies of peace officers reflect this. We are proud to work for departments who previously established policy and training to improve de-escalation practices.

Here in Ventura County, we feel grateful and fortunate to have the support of our community. We have a community that understands funding public safety is critical to keeping our community strong and safe. We are blessed to live and work in this place that has consistently been ranked as some of the safest communities in the Country.

We live in a cancel culture world and defunding the police has become a trending topic as a proposed cure for racism. Defunding police is becoming a popular cry to correct tragic mistakes similar to those in Minneapolis. Unfortunately, the effect would be contrary to the objective because defunding the police will punish innocent peace officers and make Ventura County or any jurisdiction less safe for citizens and visitors. Looking at policy and making changes that may need to be changed, training officers in diversity and culture, and most importantly, hiring the best of the best to do a difficult job, all cost money.

A jurisdiction that does not spend money on public safety will hire officers who need to work second jobs to make ends meet, as was the case in Minneapolis. To defund the police will create communities that are neither strong nor safe, and we fear will eventually result in the anarchy and chaos that we witnessed with the violent riots and looting of past weeks.

“We urge you to reject the approach of defunding police as one that is dangerous to the way of life we enjoy in this County,” VCDSA President Nick Odenath says. “In Minneapolis, officers are poorly compensated, and a review of their department policies reflects a mindset that is stuck in a different time and not consistent with 21st Century Policing. We need to assist all departments in making sure they are brought into this era of policing but not take actions that will destroy those departments that have progressed to modern policing practices. It is our hope you will join us in this call for reason and sanity and work for genuine change in those systems that do not work.”

###

Founded in 1959, the Ventura County Deputy Sheriffs' Association (VCDSA) represents the deputies from the Ventura County Sheriff's Office and Investigators from the Ventura County District Attorney Bureau of Investigations.